

• PRACTICAL REMARKS

INFANT EDUCATION

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PRACTICAL REMARKS,
ON (INFANT EDUCATION,

FOR THE USE OF
SCHOOLS AND PRIVATE FAMILIES.

BY
 THE REV. (DR. MAYO) AND MISS MAYO.

SECOND EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED.

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PREFACE.

THE Committee of the Home and Colonial Infant School Society, earnestly hope the following pages, for which they are greatly indebted to the Rev. Dr. Mayo and his Sister, will prove useful not only to teachers in Infant Schools but to parents and governesses engaged in early education. They are particularly recommended to the study of the members of Committees of Infant Schools: many such, though anxiously desirous of superintending and benefiting the institutions under their patronage, and possessing minds far more highly cultivated than the teachers they employ, are yet so wholly unacquainted with *infant education*, both in its principles and details, that they feel themselves quite at a loss; they see that their schools are not producing the fruits they desire, but are unable to trace the cause of the defect, or to suggest the remedy. The Committee anticipate

that this little work will supply what they so much need, assisting them to point out errors, and to introduce valuable improvements.

One happy feature in the present melancholy aspect of the times, is the increasing desire to furnish the poorer classes with sound moral and religious instruction: in this there is much cause for thankfulness, but the Committee fear a narrow view of the subject is also gaining ground. From the abuse of knowledge, many zealous Christians are alarmed at the mention of intellectual culture. Is it, however, just reasoning, to condemn a practice from its abuse? What has not been abused in the hands of man? Seeing that God has given to all ranks the same organs of sense, the same blessings of reason and judgment; and considering that every gift he has bestowed ought to be improved, the Committee feel it incumbent on those who provide an education for the Infant Children of the poorer classes to aim at the *development* of their bodily, mental, and moral powers, by bringing them into exercise upon fit subjects, and carefully watching that each receives its due proportion of attention; and the formation of habits of correct observation and right judgment, which whilst they prove invaluable in after life to the man of science and learning, equally contribute to make an intelli-

gent gardener, an ingenious mechanic, a useful domestic servant. With respect to the *acquisition of knowledge*, that is the work of a later period of education, when the instruction of the various classes of society necessarily takes a very different course.

The Committee are satisfied that the jealous fear which exists on the subject of early mental culture has arisen from a wrong view of the objects proposed, and it has no doubt been increased by the ridiculous attempts made in some Infant Schools to teach children scraps of science, and to load their memories with hard words and technical phrases. What they are desirous of seeing in every Infant School, is—

First, A simple course of religious instruction, in which the great aim should be, to teach the elementary truths of the Gospel, and to cultivate religious feelings and impressions.

Secondly, A careful moral training on the standard of the word of God: Christ set forth as the example; and the Holy Spirit earnestly sought as the only and all-sufficient help.

Thirdly, The cultivation of habits of accurate observation, correct description, and right judgment upon the things of nature and art.

Lastly, The improvement of the bodily organs and health by varied exercise. /

These objects are attainable, but not so easily as many imagine. The Teachers who undertake the task must not only be "apt to teach," but must themselves be taught; their own powers must be developed, and their attention earnestly directed to the subject; hence the Institution for training Teachers, which the Committee have established, has become necessary, and hence its claim to the decided support of all who are interested in the moral and religious education of the rising generation."



ADDRESS
TO
INFANT SCHOOL TEACHERS,
BY THE
REV. DR. MAYO.

IN common with many other individuals, I hailed with great delight, some years ago, the establishment of Infant Schools. These institutions, held out the cheering promise of ameliorating the moral, as well as the intellectual condition of, the working classes; and it was delightful to witness the lively intelligence, the cheerful good humour, the pure morality, the simple piety that prevailed, in many of these schools. Numerous were the instances, not only of children improved, but of parents reclaimed through their happy influence. But, alas! our expectations were found to be too sanguine, and the Infant School system had scarcely been formed, when symptoms of degeneracy began to manifest

themselves. The teachers hastily, and, in consequence, superficially instructed, caught up a few forms, and failed to imbibe the spirit of the method. In some instances, it was made a mere *plaything*; to sing a few vulgar or trivial songs, to make certain ludicrous movements, and to talk over a few pictures, were thought to be the principal business of the school. In many more, it was made an *exhibition*; a few children more lively than the rest were continually paraded before visitors, and a great deal of wonder was excited by the repetition of words which were not understood, or the display of knowledge, which puffed up rather than edified. If the coarser exhibitions of brutal passion, which disgrace the infant population in our streets were restrained, still it was most painful to see pride, vanity and other works of the flesh nurtured where they should have been checked. Out of this very spirit of display, it arose that in a large proportion of the schools, the communicating information on a variety of ill-selected topics was made of more importance, than training the children to habits of accurate observation and correct expression. Indeed, it was too generally the case, even in the schools enjoying the highest reputation, that the development of the mind was more sedulously pursued than the improvement of the temper and the formation of the moral character. And whence did this rapid degeneracy spring? Partly, as I hinted before, from the inadequate instruction which

teachers received, but still more from forgetfulness of the great objects, for which Infant Schools had been established. Inferior temporal considerations had occupied the place of superior and spiritual aims. We must then retrace our steps; we must supply our deficiencies. The Infant School must be once more *a sacrifice to the Lord*; the humble and grateful offering of Christian charity and zeal to Him, who once lisped in the accents of childhood, and tottered in the weakness of infancy. Once more must be inscribed on the portals of our Infant Schools — “Holiness to the Lord.” While all the sensibilities of infancy are waiting, as it were, for the first influence, that shall call them forth, the precious but fleeting hours must be consecrated, not so much to a “knowledge” that “vanisheth away,” as to that knowledge which is “life eternal,” the knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, whom He hath sent. The school of infancy must be as the gate of heaven, and the scenes of early instruction be regarded as “holy ground.”

Recognizing then, religion as the foundation, on which the Infant School is to rest, and warming his affections with those high and holy motives, which religion inspires, the teacher must proceed to his work. He looks around him and sees immortal spirits, souls redeemed with the blood of the Lamb. It is his part to train them for that blessed immortality, to which they are called in Christ Jesus; to

imbue them with those heavenly affections, which will fit them for the heavenly inheritance; to nourish them with "the sincere milk of the word," in doctrine and in precept. Will this end be accomplished, if they can merely repeat a catechism, detail the facts recorded in Scripture, state abstract doctrines, and support them by apposite texts? Oh, no! The heart must be animated with religious feelings, the character established on religious principles, and trained to religious habits. And they are *infants* that must be thus trained, and such a process must be pursued as is calculated to interest the *infant* mind, and touch the *infant* heart. But, unless the teacher have a clear and vivid perception of their state, if he does not instinctively feel, though he may not be able to describe, their measure of intellectual light and moral sentiment, he can never accomplish this purpose. He must bring his mind into contact with their minds, his heart into contact with their hearts. It is through the feelings that he must gain his influence over the children, and prepare them to receive the truth he inculcates. That doctrine and precept may not be a mere dead letter but a living power, he must remember that it is at least as important *how* the infant hears, as *what* he hears. Hence, when he would impart religious truth, or perform religious duties, he would seek to instil that feeling of *reverence* which is the best preparation of the heart. And how will he instil it? not so much by

disquisitions on the awful perfections of the Almighty, as, in the first place,—by evincing his *own* feeling of reverence for divine things. As he enters more deeply into the awful truths of our holy religion, and draws more near, as it were, to “the burning bush,” his *tone* of voice must become more solemn, and his manner more devout. By his very mode of handling the Bible, he will shew that he has a reverence for the sacred volume; by every look, tone, and gesture, that his heart is filled with reverence for divine truth. And yet this must not be *acting*. All acting is deceit; and deceit answers with children as with men; that is, for a brief season only, and then recoils with fearful effect on him who practises it. No; it must be the outward expression of a genuine feeling that lives and glows within. Hence it is not enough that the master be a well-informed man, or even that he has tact for communicating instruction; it is necessary also, that he should be a man of *genuine piety*.

At the same time the teacher must awaken interest and sustain attention in his class. He must not satisfy himself if a small number of the more advanced children seem to listen to his observations and reply to his questions. He must consider that he is failing in his object, unless by far the greater part are lively and attentive. Surely the habit of sitting listless, or occupied with other things, while the truths of religion are brought for-

ward, is a sorry preparation for the religious duties of after-life. Far better would the children be occupied with innocent games in the play-ground, than in trifling on the platform, while the word of God is addressed to their heedless ears. But the teacher must take the blame to himself; either he is teaching them, what they are too young to understand at all, or he is teaching in a manner ill suited to their infant minds. A well-selected object, a withered leaf, a flower, an ear of corn, will form an interesting groundwork for a lesson. Alive to impressions made through their senses, the little ones will by such means be roused to attention, and when the intelligence is awake and stirring, the teacher should gradually lead them to the moral lesson or the holy doctrine, connected in Scripture with the object he has shewn them. By a multiplicity of questions, he will seek to elicit correct ideas and enlarge their notions, at the same time ever keeping in view some *one leading idea* which it is the special purpose of the lesson to illustrate and apply. As he gradually passes from the external and visible character of the object, to those spiritual truths of which God has made them types, his manner will become more earnest and serious, and he will bring his lesson to a close with a few solemn words which the heart may drink in; while the intellectual powers, reposing but not slumbering, are best qualified to minister to the moral sentiments. In this manner he may best accom-

plish the two great ends of religious teaching, INSTRUCTION and IMPRESSION.

And will not the teacher be encouraged as thus he proceeds, by the thought that in this manner the Great Teacher led his little ones to divine truth. Will he not see in many of the parables of our Lord, the prototype of his own lessons, and the highest authority for his mode of illustration? And may he not more confidently hope for that blessing, without which he is but a "tinkling cymbal," if he seeks to teach, not only *what He taught* but *as He taught*; and uniting in all his instruction, reverence toward God and condescending kindness toward children, prays and strives to have that mind in him, "which was also in Christ Jesus." And what less than this can be "bringing up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?"

Pictures representing objects or incidents narrated in the sacred writings, present another eligible mode of awakening attention to sacred subjects. A variety of questions should be addressed to the class, stimulating them to observe and describe the several things represented. In narrating the incident, the teacher should occasionally mingle with his own more familiar language the terms of Scripture, and when he seeks to convey that particular truth, which forms, as it were, the moral of the story, he should if possible confine himself to the very words of Holy Writ.

Here a question arises as to the use of the BIBLE

itself in Infant Schools. Certainly it ought not to be excluded; but to make the reading the Scriptures the groundwork of a lesson to mere infants is a plan of very doubtful utility. The wiser course is to render each portion of Scripture to be read, familiar to the children, by pictures, by conversation and questioning; and then gradually to lead the infant mind to the Bible as presenting the most admirable form in which divine truth can be expressed. Thus the sensible and pious mother teaches her child;—she first speaks to him of his heavenly Father, who supplies his wants, and watches over him by night and by day;—of his gracious Saviour, who died on the cross for him and all mankind; and of that Holy Spirit who renews the heart, and makes us holy. Then as the mind opens and interest is excited, she tells him many a scripture story and shews him many a scripture print, gradually introducing the Bible itself as the authentic record of these things,—as God's own statement of God's own truth. Thus too it was of old;—the church was somewhat advanced in knowledge by the oral addresses of the inspired preacher, and then it was furnished with the sacred writings, that it might be built up and established in the truth. It is surely the duty of teachers in the present day, to walk in the same steps.

A systematic course of instruction possesses great advantage over detached lessons. Every one

feels that there is a certain beauty and value in arrangement; we delight to trace it in the works of nature and to imitate it in the works of art. The first knowledge which the infant instinctively acquires is casual and desultory; but as soon as education commences, order and system must gradually be introduced. The perception of harmonious arrangement, and the due appreciation of order exercise a great influence on the moral character. The teacher too finds that one lesson prepares the way for another, that a satisfactory sense of progress springs up in the minds of the children, and that they retain the clearest recollection of those truths which they have seen in mutual connection.

In an Infant School each course of instruction should be short, and an introductory course to the whole set should be periodically repeated, at short intervals, for the convenience of new-comers. Thus the teacher should commence his systematic religious instruction with the subject matter of the four first chapters of Genesis, and then proceed to bring before his class the leading features in the history of our Blessed Lord. This course would contain the leading points on which all scriptural instruction should turn. The creation of the world, the fall of man, and the consequences of sin would appear in the Old Testament portion, the New Testament portion would exhibit the course which divine mercy has pursued for the restoration of man through the incarnation, life, death, resurrec-

tion and ascension of the Redeemer, and the gift of the Spirit. This plan seems to unite the most advantages ; it places the knowledge of the disease before that of the remedy, and yet does not deter too long the knowledge of the latter. But if the teacher commenced with the New Testament, our Lord's coming into the world would be treated on, before the necessity of his doing so had been made apparent ; and on the other hand, if the teacher were to travel through the Old Testament before he reached the New, he would scarcely in the course of his instruction reach the most important part, that which is calculated to exercise the best influence on the infant mind.

Other short courses should be arranged ; as for example, one containing a selection of the parables, another of the miracles of our Lord, another of scriptural narratives illustrative respectively of important moral truths ; others of leading scripture characters as Abraham, Jacob, David. The first or introductory course should be frequently repeated for the benefit of new-comers. The other must follow at the discretion of the teacher, the arrangement of an Infant School not admitting of an exact order being maintained throughout the whole series.

In an *Infant School*, Poetry should be dedicated to the development of moral and religious sentiment. It should be regarded as an important means, by which moral and religious

impression is to be made, as well as a valuable and interesting channel, through which religious truth is to be communicated. Has not then this powerful means been too generally perverted in our Infant Schools from its lofty and legitimate purpose? Admitting that in some instances very useful information has been communicated in rhymes, still the generality of the pieces taught are ill-written in point of style, and comparatively unimportant in point of matter. The teacher, regarding the inculcation of moral and religious truth as the true province of poetry in his School, should look with a jealous eye on the introduction of any other subjects in that attractive form. Subjects of natural history should be treated in that moral spirit, which characterizes the hymns of Dr. Watts. If the tables of Arithmetic *must* be introduced, they might be reserved for the highest class. But whenever the management of the National or Juvenile School and that of the Infant School, are placed under the same general superintendence, so that the course of Education may be considered as a whole, and each part assigned to its proper time and place, the learning of these tables might well be reserved for the later period. Of those little songs, whose object is to amuse and exhilarate, I would not form a harsh judgment. The age of infancy should be an age of cheerfulness, and the Infant School a happy place. But may not some broad distinction be

made between such compositions and the higher class of infant poetry? Might not the former be confined to measured prose and a simple chant; while rhyme and more regular tunes are appropriated to moral and religious pieces?

In educating the infant, let us look to the future man, and ask ourselves what recollections of early childhood will be most valuable in after years? What kind of rhymes would a pious mother desire should recur to her child's mind, when he rises in the morning or lies down at night, when he is seeking to while away the hours of sickness, or should he be preparing himself for death? In the hours especially devoted to religious exercises, either at school at home, or in public worship, how much more suitable that some simple devotional hymn should suggest itself to the mind, than that some doggerel rhyme on any trivial subject should be continually jingling in the ears. An objection would probably be started, that though the children will remember and repeat those better and more valuable pieces of poetry at suitable seasons, they will also repeat them at unsuitable times—as they go along the streets, and while they are busied with their little games, and thus weaken their reverence for sacred things, and efface the sentiments those very hymns may have inspired. But that praise which proceedeth “out of the mouths of babes and sucklings,” will be often an acceptable sacrifice before God, though it may displease and even offend the

ears of mortals. And as it seems to spring out of the constitution of our minds that those thoughts and those expressions, which most frequently engage and most deeply interest it, do recur uncalled for, and sometimes even unseasonably, it would seem to be unwisely fastidious to neglect the pre-occupying of the infant mind with the best sentiments and the best expressions, because occasionally they may be ludicrously associated. The reverence which children have been taught to feel for divine truths, is rather suspended than weakened by this involuntary recurrence of such subjects; and it is only when they are *intentionally* brought forward in a spirit of levity that there can be any effacing or even weakening of the desired impression. The teacher too, by judicious management, will train them to associate with their more serious occupations the hymns they learn, and with their amusements the simple chants to which reference has been made.

Lessons should be given on the hymns in order that they may be well understood; and the children should be frequently questioned upon them before they sing, to prevent as far as possible, its becoming a mere mechanical exercise, in which the heart and understanding are not engaged.

A judicious selection of Infant School Rhymes appears yet a desideratum. Watts and Taylor would supply many excellent pieces. The mate-

rials are indeed abundant, discriminate choice is all that is required. At present the weeds are choking the corn; and things of trifling value are thrusting out the most valuable productions. After all, the most important requisite is—that the teacher's mind should be deeply imbued with the great truth that “one thing is needful,” and that, if he can draw the infant to sit at Jesus' feet and hear his word, while yet the heart is tender and the conscience is unseared; he has done more for him than if he had filled his head with all the learning of Egypt. Different circumstances must render necessary modifications of general principles. We may be forced by the pressure of local difficulties, to deviate in some measure from the course which an enlightened judgment teaches us is best: but if we clearly perceive what is the better course, our deviation will not be greater than is necessary, and the inconveniences attending it may in some degree be counteracted.

An Infants' School should unquestionably open and close with *prayer*. It is advisable that a Form of Prayer be used. This form should be plain in language and simple in sentiment. Care should be taken that the infants well understand it, and constant endeavours should be made to develop in them the sentiments it expresses. Thus may it become *their* prayer; the desire of *their* hearts expressed nearly in such terms as they might have used themselves. To promote this end, the

true principles of prayer should be familiarly explained. The teacher might enter upon the subject by the consideration of what children generally expect from their earthly parents, and the readiness and confidence with which they apply to their parents for the supply of these wants. Many questions might be put to the children, founded on that relation. When our Lord would speak of the privilege of prayer, he reminded his hearers how children asked gifts of an earthly parent. To inspire confidence in prayer, he assured them that, as an earthly parent would not give an indigestible stone or a noxious animal, to the child who asked him for nourishing food, so their heavenly FATHER, who was intimately acquainted with their real necessities, and able to supply them all, would not withhold from them any thing that was good, and would not give them any thing that was evil. When he would set forth the necessity of urgent prayer, he reminded them—that even a man retired to rest and unwilling to be disturbed, would yet rise and give bread to his friend who persisted in his entreaties and would take no refusal. The teacher might dwell with some emphasis on the necessity and value of temporal blessings; and when the children understood what it was to ask God for food, for raiment, for health of body, and other blessings of this present life, they would then be better able to understand what was meant, when they were told to ask for spiritual blessings, for a

change of heart, for power to love God, for ability to perform their duty.

Permit me to press upon your earnest and prayerful consideration the following portrait of an Infant School Teacher.

'Let' him be some man of God, whose heart, warm with the consciousness of God's forgiving love delights to dwell on his Redeemer's goodness, and prompts him, with the genuine warmth of actual experience, to be telling of his salvation from day to day. Let him be one who will not tire of that theme, because it is the truth he lives on himself, and which he feels to be fruitful of peace and joy; orthodoxy of opinion, though necessary, is not sufficient; there must be a breathing vitality about his religion, an animating energy about his piety, that shall make him, with God's blessing, the spiritual father of a numerous race. He must be *a man of prayer*: no human power can accomplish the work before him: he must look, and steadfastly look, to those everlasting hills, from whence cometh his help. With prayer must he gird himself for his work; in the spirit of prayer, must he carry it on; in the incense of prayer, must the offering of his day's exertion ascend before the throne. He must be *a man mighty in the Scriptures*; line must be upon line, precept upon precept; the word

¹ See Sermon on Infant School Education, by the Rev. Dr. Mayo.

of God must be in his mouth, in all its varied fitness; a word of instruction, a word of reproof, a word of warning, a word of encouragement. Does some difficulty arise, ever must he interrogate himself, What saith the Scripture? Is some truth to be proposed, still must he preface it with, Thus saith the Lord! He must be *a man in whom is the mind of Christ*: looking to Jesus every step he takes, he must learn of *him*, who was meek and lowly of heart. *He* was the teacher sent from God, and all men must be taught of him before the work of the Lord can prosper in their hands. *He* did not strive nor cry, neither did any man hear his voice in the streets; the bruised reed he did not break, the smoking flax he did not quench. Would the earthly teacher walk in his steps? Let these words be graven on his heart: "The servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men; apt to teach, patient, in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves." What will be the first desire of such a man in behalf of the little ones confided to his care? Surely not that their heads be filled with the knowledge that puffeth up, but that their hearts be warmed with the charity that edifieth. He will continually call to mind, that the true end of an Infant School, is to bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord: doubtless he would endeavour to develope their understandings, and to convey to them useful information; but his first, his great aim will be,

to imbue their hearts with the doctrines and precepts of the Gospel. Nor will he seek to impart that knowledge even of divine things, which he can most *easily* exhibit. His instruction will be that, best traced in the conduct of his scholars, whose praise is not of men, but of God. One act of kindness, one token of tender sympathy, one instance of self-control, one bud of opening piety, will be more precious, more dear to his heart, than the strongest effort of memory, the liveliest sally of imagination; the brightest display of intelligence. It is when Infant Schools are consecrated to the Lord, and the teachers sanctify the Lord in their hearts, that we can look with confidence for success in the work." Such is the teacher suited to an Infant School; such is the spirit which he should at least endeavour to manifest. Something is even gained by our proposing to ourselves a high and holy aim, and the Spirit of God "helpeth our infirmities," and in answer to prayer, works in us those graces which we desire to possess. But however excellent may be the disposition of a Teacher, however humble and devoted, and affectionate, and diligent; and heavenly-minded and prayerful he may be, when he enters on his work, he is still man, and therefore subject to decline and fall. The warm and living energy of his piety may languish, the spring of his devotedness and zeal may be relaxed, and while the outward frame of his occupations remains unaltered, the spirit that

animated them may have flown. Under such circumstances a greater degree of interest would be felt in developing the intellectual faculties, than in correcting the temper, and forming the moral principles of the children : more earnestness would be shewn in communicating knowledge, useful only for this life, than in inculcating the truths of Scripture, which make wise unto salvation. And even when religious instruction is to be imparted, the only endeavour will be to inform the understanding, while the higher work of impressing the heart will be neglected. When a teacher has begun to decline in zeal, he may lose in succession all the excellences he once possessed. His temper may become sour, his discipline lax, and his instruction prove day after day more mechanical, superficial and uninteresting ; while the necessity of occasionally exhibiting his school will lead him to trickery and deception, that he may hide the deficiencies he has not resolution enough to remove.

These reflections lead me to consider the peculiar dangers to which *Infant School Teachers* are exposed. The first danger which I would point out is that of cultivating their natural minds with too much zeal. As teachers of others, they begin to apply themselves to the acquisition of useful knowledge. Every day, perhaps, they see their need of increasing their stores, and every day they address themselves to the acquiring of fresh informa-

tion. This eager pursuit has a great tendency to steal the heart away from God, and to blunt the edge of their religious affections; to lead them to seek the "knowledge that puffeth up," rather than the "clarity which edifieth." Had they formerly been addicted to mere *sensual* pleasures and gratifications, they would at once perceive, that such indulgences are diametrically opposed to pure religion, and irreconcilable with their office; and a variety of motives would concur to enable them to resist the temptation. "But it is not so with *intellectual* pleasures: the mind may be intensely occupied in such pursuits, without any idea of danger; and the affections may be engaged, and the heart stolen away, without any consciousness of the change on the part of the individual himself. To use the language of the inspired prophet: "Grey hairs are here and there upon him, and he knoweth it not."

Another danger is that arising from *the love of human praise*. The Teacher cannot but be aware of the success of his own exertions among the children of his care. He will, at the same time, be anxious to give full satisfaction to his patrons, this will lead to the temptation of making an exhibition of the children, to prove the excellence of the system which the Teacher has adopted. That exhibition may please and astonish the visitors and parents; it will please and astonish them the more, in proportion as the exhibition is perfect; but it is,

all the time, doing great harm to the children, in the utter loss of infantine simplicity. For they cannot but see, that they are giving pleasure, or exciting astonishment. Who that has watched either Infant or National Schools, has not seen, that this danger is incurred?

Next to the *desire* of human applause, is the assurance that such applause is deserved. From a want of due self-examination—of vigilance—of private devotion—of bowing humbly before the cross of CHRIST—of going in faith to the throne of grace, to find grace to help in time of need, the Teacher, and especially the successful Teacher, is apt “to think of himself more highly than he ought to think.” He cannot but perceive, that many in the same rank of life as himself, have far less information about the works of GOD, and the various productions of art; and then, how natural is *self-conceit*. All are prone by nature to be puffed up in their fleshly mind; but it is peculiarly the case with those who are engaged in the acquirement of knowledge. A man is apt to be blinded with the glitter of *the little* which he does know, because he is not aware of *the much* which he does not know. They indeed, who in early life have laid a deep foundation for the attainment of various knowledge frequently have a consciousness of the vastness of the field they are exploring, and the comparatively small progress they have made in it; hence, men of the highest science, are often

modest and unassuming. An Infant School Teacher, however, from a variety of circumstances, is peculiarly liable to be puffed up with the consciousness of his little attainments; hence, he peculiarly needs the grace of God. And blessed be our heavenly Father, he dispenses his grace to all who seek it. He puts the desire for that grace into their hearts; he induces them to pray for it; and then, bestows it liberally and upbraideth not.

If then you are exposed to dangers on the one hand, you have a sure protection on the other. Your occupations will stir up the corruption lurking in your hearts, but the grace of Christ is sufficient for you. "Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation; the spirit may be willing, but the flesh is weak."

PRACTICAL REMARKS

ON

INFANT EDUCATION.

CHAPTER I.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.

IN the preceding address, my brother has set forth the spirit in which Infant Schools should be conducted; to which I have been requested to add a few hints on the practical business of education, and to enter into the daily work of the school-room. In a future publication it is intended to supply a series of model lessons on the different branches of instruction fitted for Infant Schools.

The subject naturally presents itself under four heads.

I. Religious.—II. Moral—III. Intellectual, and
IV. Physical.

I. I propose to consider first, as being the first

in importance,¹ the best means of awakening religious impressions, and of combining the inculcation of religious principles with the first elements of religious knowledge.

The Infant School teacher should not bring before his children dry abstract doctrines. He should aim so to present to them the elementary truths of our holy religion, that they may, under God's blessing, influence the heart, and enlighten the conscience. That there is a God who made us and all things; who sees us at all times, for the darkness is no darkness to him; that he is a holy God, who hates sin and cannot look upon iniquity; that all mankind sin against this God, and deserve condemnation, but that in his great mercy, he gave his only Son to be our Saviour; that this Saviour, Jesus Christ our Lord, died upon the cross for us, receiving in his person the punishment due to the sins of the world, and procuring for us the gift of his Holy Spirit, by whose influence our naturally wicked hearts must be changed in order to render us meet for the kingdom of heaven. These are the simple truths to be inculcated; it is also very important that they should be presented in a regular course, that they

¹ I have entered less fully on this most important branch of education, as it has been dwelt upon in my brother's address. To his sentiments on prayer I have nothing to add, but to recommend that the teachers should make them particularly their study, and frequently bring the subject of prayer before the children as a distinct lesson, that they may be taught to understand its nature and feel its value.

may be arranged in their right places in the memory, and their true connection preserved. I entirely concur in the plan recommended by my brother, to begin with the account of the creation of all things by the word of Almighty power,—of man in a state of holiness and happiness,—his fall;—the effects of the fall made awfully evident in the history of Cain and Abel, and also in the wickedness that so rapidly overspread the world;—God's hatred of sin displayed in the flood, which swept from the earth all who had not sought refuge in the ark. This narration, taken from the first chapters of Genesis, having prepared the children to see the necessity of a Saviour, his history as given by the Evangelists should follow, and they should be led to observe how, by his cross and passion, he obtained eternal redemption for us, and in his life of perfect obedience and holiness, set us an example that we should follow his steps, looking to the promised Comforter for help.

I would advise all teachers to keep by them a summary of the religious truths they propose to inculcate, that by occasionally referring to it, they may see that they do not omit any important doctrine, nor allow any one in particular to have an undue preponderance in the instruction they give.

The *biography of Scripture* furnishes a most instructive series of lessons. The certainty of its truths gives it a great charm to youthful minds, and its beautiful simplicity suits their capacities,

whilst its exemplification of God's dealings with mankind, his punishment of vice, and reward of virtue, afford subjects well calculated for exercising the moral sensibility, and forming religious principles. No abstract reasoning, no praise of virtue, no declamation against vice, will ever produce equal effects to these records of human frailty and triumphs of divine grace. Scripture biography may also be introduced at times with great propriety, to exemplify some precept against which the children have been sinning, or to encourage them in the practice of some virtue in which they have shewn themselves deficient.

Next to the *arrangement* of a course of religious instruction, it is important to consider the *mode* of *imparting it*.

Before a Teacher begins a Scripture lesson, he should endeavour to prepare the children's minds to take an interest in the subject of it; this may be done by exciting their curiosity, and finding some point in their own experience analogous to the one it is wished to bring before them. Suppose you are going to give your first lesson on the creation of all things by Almighty power; you should prepare them to receive the truth and to be interested in it, by leading them to the consideration of what man can make—what he requires before he is able to make anything—what he cannot make—who must have made the things that man could not have made; when their attention and

interest are thus drawn to the point desired, then shew from the Bible how God in the beginning created, or made out of nothing, the heavens and the earth.

Study to present the subject of every lesson in a simple, clear, and striking manner; the great fault in oral instruction in general is, that it is diffuse and rambling. When you get interested in the subject, many ideas will suggest themselves, and you will be in danger of forgetting to observe whether the children keep pace with you; but remember, the great point is, not how much *you* can say, but how much *they* can receive with advantage. Your endeavour in each lesson should be to imprint on their memories one simple fact, one important truth, or influential precept. Let the whole instruction more or less tend to the *one* point; and do not ingeniously endeavour to see how many different parts of scripture you can hang on to the lesson, for by so doing, you distract the children's attention from the main subject, and weaken its interest.

Again, do not treat them as mere recipients of knowledge, but bring their minds into activity by questions calling forth thought, and by so presenting truth to them that they will seek and grasp it for themselves; they then, in addition to the knowledge communicated, improve the *power* of thinking and attain habits of investigation. Endeavour to engage all the school to feel an interest in some part of the lesson, if they cannot understand the

whole, and before closing, repeat the substance of it in condensed, simple language.

It would be desirable that the text selected for the day, as well as the hymn, should have reference to the subject taken for scriptural instruction; variety will thus be combined with unity, and the children's attention be kept for some time, without weariness, on one point. On the morrow, before entering on any new matter, a summary of the lesson of the preceding day should be repeated, and a trial made to ascertain how many remember the substance of it.

In religious instruction, there should be a continual appeal to the children's own experience, as well as a *personal* application of Scripture; they should be taught to see how its precepts and demands bear upon their daily conduct and dispositions, in order that conscience may be trained to do its appointed work. Without much attention to this point, you will find, that, though quick-sighted enough in discovering the faults of others, and forward to condemn as most shocking the sins detailed in the Bible, they will not perceive how they themselves are guilty of the same faults. Even David, when the prophet set before him his sin in a parable, saw all its heinousness, but saw not himself the sinner, until the bold reprover declared, "Thou art the man." Education must work against this natural deceitfulness of the human heart, and under God's blessing, there is no more effectual way of

counteracting it than by endeavouring to convict children of sin in their daily conduct, by a direct reference to the word of God. There should also be a constant desire to awaken religious feelings and sentiments. Children are so alive to sympathy, that much may be effected by manner, indeed a teacher may in a great measure set the tone of feeling in his school. He should take care that they are impressed with awe and reverence, when with solemnity of manner he speaks of God as their Creator and Judge; with grateful tenderness, when the love of the Saviour is set before them; with shame and fear, when sin and its fatal consequences are described; it is not however desirable that young children should be often called upon to express their feelings; they are so much the creatures of imitation and momentary impulse, that they often receive the words and feelings of others, and consider them as their own, and are thus led into hypocrisy and a false estimate of themselves.

Although there is a great deal in the system hitherto pursued in Infant Schools to be admired, and the beneficial effects they have produced ought to be acknowledged with much gratitude, yet many enlightened persons are of opinion that their success has not been commensurate with the promise they held out at their first introduction. Are not the failures to be attributed mainly to the neglect or forgetfulness of the faculties and affections of children, which it is the business of education to

develope? It is with no censorious spirit, but with the kindest intention, that we would speak of faults; there is however nothing that shews the value of a principle, and explains its nature so strikingly, as setting forth the consequences of acting in opposition to it. On the whole, it is rather a matter of surprise that there is not more to condemn, considering that hitherto there has been no established system of infant education, teachers having worked pretty much as they pleased, restricted occasionally by local committees, perhaps themselves but little acquainted with the principles or details of early education.

The first error I would notice is in the religious instruction given in Infant Schools, it has been too desultory and unconnected. God is a God of order, nature as well as revelation attests this truth, and we can only hope for success in our undertakings when we imitate his example, and obey his precepts. We all feel the inconvenience attendant upon disorder in material things, how difficult it is to find any thing when there is a total disregard to arrangement, and all is confusion. It is the same with the human mind; when there has been no attention paid to the arrangement of the subjects of instruction, they will be recalled with difficulty, and prove comparatively devoid of influence.

A second error is that of associating ideas together which have only an accidental connection;

as for example when a sheep is taken for the subject of a lesson, instead of leading the children at once to consider either those points in which it is a type of our blessed Lord, or those in which it fitly represents weak, erring man, and letting all the lesson bear upon *one* of these points, so that the sight of a lamb might call up some of the first truths of religion and awaken serious feelings,—it is asked, in a lesson common in works prepared for Infant Schools, ‘What city fell down at the sound of the ram’s horn? What ram had his horns caught in a thicket?’ &c. A similar mistake is made when the facts and truths of scripture are connected by the mere circumstance of their agreeing in number,—as ten commandments, ten plagues, &c.; or three feasts of the Jews, three great thrones, three burning mountains, &c.; or by their beginning with the same letter.¹ This mode of teaching is opposed to the important principle of creating such associations in children’s minds as are essentially valuable. May we not justly fear that their reverence for sacred subjects will be lowered, if they are accustomed to string texts together by letters, or numbers? Is not a false value thus attached to an indifferent point? Whereas, if facts and ideas are associated in the mind by what is essential to

¹ Thus children are often called out before the school and desired to give a text beginning with the letter *a*, then one with *b* and so on; how much more profitable would this exercise be if it trained them to recollect and apply texts enforcing some moral duty or proving some important truth.

them, and by the true relation which they bear to each other, the judgment of the children will be improved, and a readiness of memory promoted.

A third error is, that whilst the doctrines of the Bible are often given to the children in the language used by divines, without considering whether it is fitted for their understandings; they are made to repeat the attributes of the Deity, which, taken abstractedly, are not intelligible to them; they should be led to see and feel these attributes, in God's dealings, towards mankind, either as recorded in his revealed word, or as displayed in his daily providences towards themselves. Presented in this manner, they are felt, and under God's blessing, produce right impressions; presented separately from the works in which they are displayed, they are but as a list of hard words to which the children will at best, attach very indefinite ideas, nay, it is not improbable that associations of dislike may be excited to a Being whose attributes are so unintelligible to them.

Fourthly—the plan of making children commit to memory lists of different things; such as the names of the Books of the Bible, &c.; neither exercises the mind nor the heart; and it leads to the serious moral evil of puffing them up with the semblance of learning. Those who have much to do with children are well aware how easy it is to fill the memory with names; a teacher by doing so may enable them to make a great display of their

acquirements, to the surprise of casual visitors ; but a single remark in which they shew thought or right feeling, will be much more valued by those who really understand what education ought to be.

Fifthly — *Catechisms*, excellent as they are as summaries of religious truths, and valuable as a means of fixing those truths in the mind in a condensed form, so as readily to be recalled, are completely out of place in an Infant School. It is the hearts, the affections of infants that are to be gained on the side of religion ; abstract doctrines they cannot understand ; and if you accustom them to receive into their memories, not only those truths, which from their very nature are above their comprehension, but doctrinal views, which from the form in which they are conveyed, can awaken no idea or feeling, it is very probable that their understandings will continue inactive, and their hearts unmoved. When they are of an age to understand and feel the doctrines, they may learn catechisms with great profit ; they will then be able to appreciate the value of having the truths of their holy religion so arranged and compressed, that they can be committed to memory, and be at all times ready for use.

Whilst, however, it is recommended that infants should not have their memories loaded with abstract truths beyond their comprehension, or with hard words, or technical phraseology, it does not follow that this faculty is in no wise to be cultivated, on the contrary, acting in conformity with nature,—

we would cultivate and store the memory, because it is peculiarly retentive in early life. The right use of this faculty is all that is contended for. Every progressive step in instruction should be committed to the keeping of the memory, and, above all, it should be well stored with scripture and hymns; and though in general the texts selected should be practical, yet considering, that many of the children may receive no other education than what they obtain in an Infant School, I would not omit to give them, from time to time, a little arranged series of texts, with a view to imprint on their minds the leading truths of Christianity.

Sixthly,—*Pictures* have been much resorted to as helps in early education, particularly on religious subjects; but they have been made too much play-things—and subjects having been chosen altogether unfit for pictorial representation, the most erroneous impressions have been conveyed by them. Pictures are, however, very useful in enabling the teacher to gain the attention of the whole school, and by exciting a general interest, may lead to profitable conversation and instruction. The impressions received through the medium of the sight, are among the most vivid and lasting; and scripture history, which has been studied from prints in childhood, is generally, in after years, very easily recalled, with all the minute circumstances and associations connected with it. The pictures should, however, be used with caution; the representation should not

be given when the real object can be obtained, as the former will produce comparatively vague and indefinite ideas—pictures easily recal ideas, which have been originally gained from an examination of the thing itself, but they are a poor substitute in the first instance. They answer best for artificial objects, such as machinery or implements of labour. It does not appear desirable to hang them round the room, for they lose their interest if constantly seen; neither should they be used too frequently, for children must not be accustomed to expect excitement. A judicious teacher will see when such helps, by furnishing a little variety to the usual routine of instruction, may prove useful; perhaps the introduction of a new pupil would be a good opportunity for a picture-lesson,—it being important that the first impressions of the school-room should be those of cheerful happiness.

CHAPTER II.

MORAL EDUCATION.

THIS branch of education consists in the *cultivation of right feelings and sentiments ; and the formation of principles and habits*. • It cannot be too strongly enforced that the paramount object in every Infant School should be to call into action the affections of the children, and to engage them on the side of religion and morality. It is the great honour of these establishments, that they have taken precedence in recognizing the unspeakable value of this branch of education. Most equivocal indeed would be the advantages they offer, if they aimed at mere intellectual attainment ; or if the religious instruction were addressed to the understanding only. No ! the ground on which Infant Schools have the strongest claim upon our gratitude and support, is their *moral training on the principles of the Gospel*.

If religious instruction be carried on in a right manner, it will undoubtedly tend to the formation

of good principles ; but it must be the constant aim of the teacher to strengthen the connection, and to point out how religious knowledge ought to produce moral habits. One of the most powerful auxiliaries to the cultivation of the character is the force of example ; children not only imitate what those around them do and say, but involuntarily acquire their habits and manners. It is not enough, therefore, that a teacher speak of love and recommend it ; he must habitually exhibit it in his conduct ; he must display untiring good humour, sympathising tenderness, and playful vivacity, keeping up in the school-room an atmosphere of cheerfulness and love. The force of example, however, is not in itself sufficient for the formation of moral character ; the consciences of the children must be exercised in determining between right and wrong, in choosing the good and rejecting the evil, whilst the power of resisting temptation is strengthened ; they should be carefully watched, though at the same time allowed freedom of action ; trials and temptations will arise in their intercourse with each other, especially in the play-ground, and their conduct should be brought to the test of scripture precepts, and made the subject of affectionate admonition, or fatherly correction, as the case may require.

- One of the first impressions that a teacher should endeavour to make on children's minds, with a view to their moral education, is the conviction of their

PRACTICAL REMARKS

*responsibility to God.*¹ They must be taught that they are not at liberty to sin,—that it is not a matter of indifference how they behave, so that they injure no one,—but, that on the contrary, they will be called to account for the omission of what is right, as well as the commission of what is wrong. With the knowledge of their responsibility, let the impression that the eye of the Lord is ever upon them be connected, that their habitual feeling may be, “Thou God seest me.”

It is very important also to accustom them to consider their right position in society, and their consequent duties. Teach them that the different grades of rank are established by the Lord, and that each has its appointed work, as each member of our body has its peculiar office. By leading them to look to God as the disposer of their lot, and to themselves as unworthy recipients of his mercies, you will promote a spirit of cheerfulness and contentment, and a desire of rendering to all their due.

In order to correct that selfish principle which disposes us to view things through a false medium, considering more what others owe to us than what we owe to them, bring before them the claims of their companions, — of their master, — of their

¹ This they will have learnt indeed in their religious instruction, but it must become the motive of their conduct; the inducement for watchfulness and self-restraint;—religion and morality, must proceed together.

parents,—of God. Teach them to consider their actions¹ in reference to those claims, and see that they not only acknowledge the principle, but that they carry it out into practice; for it is essential, whilst awakening feelings and instilling princi-

¹ The following excellent remarks are from Dr. Biber's Lectures on education. Teachers would do well to study them. 'On the first step of (moral) education, it becomes our duty to direct the child to the source from which his actions flow, and first of all to the bodily organs through which they are performed. Having then, by a continued course of questions reduced every action he performs to that organ of his body from which it proceeds, we may change the view, and from the organs proceed to the actions. We may then ask the child, what action he performs with each organ; and a step further, we may ask him which of these actions he ought, and which he ought not to perform. In the same manner, we may ask him for those actions which he ought to perform, and does not perform. In this manner, the child will arrive at a clear view of what he does, by what means he does it, and what proportion his life bears to his duty. Deeper than this it is impossible to go at the first step, but we may proceed further in extent,—we may ask for the manner in which, the feelings with which, and the motives from which those actions have been performed; and if we put these questions in a gradual progress, we shall always receive such answers as will convince us that the child is alive to self-observation.' Again, 'We ought to direct the child's attention to every effect produced by his actions, whether intentionally or not. This must be done at first with regard to the objects of the outward world, and it will then be easy to make the application of it to his relationship in human society. A person accustomed to view his actions in all their bearings upon others, will certainly be in less danger of pursuing his own views, perfectly regardless of the feelings of those who are in contact with him, and who may be deeply affected by his proceedings.'

ples, to cultivate moral habits; and habits are formed by the frequent repetition of an action. Call upon them, in their intercourse with each other, to exercise *kindness and sympathy*. Your own conduct should awaken the feeling, and the *habit* will be formed, if the children be stimulated to little acts of kindness and tenderness. *Self-denial* also may be called into action by encouraging a readiness to give up their own pleasures and privileges to administer to some less favoured companion; and in their daily intercourse abundant opportunities will occur for the formation of a disposition to *forbear* and to *forgive*.

In these days when the restraints of authority seem ready to be cast aside, when inferiors cannot brook submission to superiors, and when children seek to be independent of parents, it is highly important that in the earliest stage of life, habits of *cheerful, prompt obedience* be cultivated. We see this duty strongly enforced in the Bible; the history of the Rechabites shews how pleasing it is in the sight of God; and, we have the example of him who though Lord of all, when he condescended to tread the earth as a little child, was subject to his parents, fulfilling all righteousness. Towards yourself exact respect and submission; but carefully watch over your own heart, and see that you do not require it because you are tenacious of your right, but because you have the children's good at heart, and desire to develope

a right principle in requiring from them what it is their duty to render. The parent's authority is delegated to you, and it must be your care that it is honoured. Erroneous views of this duty are held by some; they say 'we would govern altogether by love; we value little the obedience that is not the free offering of affection.' They forget that it is the work of education to develop every right principle and feeling, and not only must the obedience which springs from love be cultivated, but that also which arises from the *subjugation of self-will*. In order to form this virtue into a habit, let it first be exacted in those things which are neither difficult nor disagreeable. The idea of drilling the children into order and discipline by their various evolutions in marching, clapping of hands, &c. is very excellent.¹ The habit is thus formed in a great measure through the influence of

¹ Mr. Bilby, late Master of the Chelsea Infant School, who has been so successfully employed in forming Infant Schools in Jamaica, gave me an interesting account of the manner in which he quickly obtained an influence over the wild negro children, and brought them into order. An Infant School having been opened, on the first morning a crowd of little black pupils rushed into it, singing and dancing after their own fashion; an inauspicious commencement many would have imagined. I asked Mr. Bilby what he did. 'I danced with them' was his reply. He thus first gained their sympathies: he then introduced some order into the dance, made them join hands, form into circles, then proposed their all sitting down, then rising together, then sitting; so acting simultaneously at the word of command. Thus insensibly to themselves, and without pain, they were formed into an orderly band.

sympathy, and one stumbling-block to the reception of the principle of obedience is overcome. Thus in conformity with the government of our heavenly Father, who graduates his trials according to the spiritual advancement of his people, parents and teachers should proportion their requirements to the moral state of the children they have to deal with. Having obtained the children's obedience towards yourself, you must also take care that the principle you have inculcated leads to respectful submission to the authority of their parents. Do not be content with knowing what children are at school, but endeavour at the same time to learn how they conduct themselves at home.

In training children to consider the rights of their neighbours, accustom them to pay *a scrupulous regard to property*. Teach them that they are to take nothing but what is positively their own; for indefinite views on this point often prove the first step to stealing. It is important to convince them, that they sin as much against the principle in a small matter as in a great; it is the device of Satan, by which he tempts us to overleap the barrier between virtue and vice, to make us believe that it is of no importance to transgress in minor points. Opportunities will continually occur in which you may apply the principles of strict honesty and integrity to their practical conduct. How few children when sent by their parents to purchase food, can resist the temptation of pilfering some of it.

The loaf of bread seldom reaches home without having been well picked by the young bearer. State to them little circumstances of this description which continually occur. Call upon them to decide the character of an action, and to say how it is a deviation from any principle you have set before them; taking care in general not to tax any of them in particular with offences, but leave each individual conscience to make the application you desire.

The principle of regard to the property of others should not be confined to the taking of what does not belong to us, it extends to the injury of it in any way. It is in fact robbery, wantonly to lessen the value of that which belongs to another. In Infant Schools this propensity can easily be watched over and counteracted, and in some it has been done with great success. When there is a garden attached to the school, the children may be trained scrupulously, to abstain from touching or taking the fruit or flowers, and though this requires considerable self-denial, yet where principles have been carefully instilled, and habits formed and watched over, it has been most effectually and satisfactorily done.

No principle needs more careful cultivation than a *love of truth*. Let the standard of this moral excellence in your school be very high. Shew how its breach is as much seen in the action that is intended to deceive, in the equivocation that keeps back the real fact, as in the positive assertion of a falsehood. Let your own conduct be

strictly true in every minute particular ; in your statement of facts ; in your distribution of praise and censure, and in your punctilious adherence to your promises. Children are tempted to falsehood from their imagination being more active than their reasoning powers and principles—the fear of punishment or disgrace—or the more depraved motive of gaining some end. Springing from such different causes, the fault must be differently treated.

The imagination is very lively in children. Their statements are little to be depended upon : they continually bring forward as a fact what is their own view of a fact, they amplify some of its parts, keep back others, and thus convey a very erroneous impression, even when they have had no premeditated intention to deceive. This evil, which unchecked will grow into a habit of falsehood, the discipline of an Infant School presents peculiar facilities for counteracting. The children should be encouraged with kind sympathy, to relate the little circumstances that interest them, and thus will the transactions in the play-ground, often afford a subject for a moral lesson to the whole school. The teacher should carefully avail himself of these opportunities to correct misstatements, he must cautiously sift their little histories, shew how much is really true, and how much of a false gloss has been thrown over their accounts by excited feelings ; thus giving them the habit of viewing things as they really are, and of stating nothing but

the simple truth. Besides investigating their account of circumstances which may have occurred when their feelings were called out ; it would also be a good exercise to accustom them to describe what they have seen in different places, in their walks at home, &c. This will enable you to correct the spirit of exaggeration, and that love of the marvellous which so often leads away from truth. Do not allow them to use any epithet that conveys an impression beyond the real fact, and at all times shew your disapproval of whatever is not in strict accordance with truth ; forbid even in play the use of a momentary deception—this may appear very strict, but it is most important to hedge in the moral principle on every side.

Timid, as well as imaginative children are often guilty of untruths ; but their treatment should be very different. Cultivate the fear of God, as a corrective to the fear of man. Shelter them from trial till good principles and habits are formed. Never threaten them with punishment, make them feel that you are their friend, that you sympathise in their trials, and are pleased when they overcome their evil propensities.

But some you will find,—and no wonder when you consider what their homes are, — who are wilful liars, whose desires are strong, and who care not by what means they are gratified. These are characters requiring great judgment and temper ; if remonstrance and advice have no

effect, their delinquencies must be met by decided punishment; at the same time watch every opportunity to raise their character by cultivating and commending any semblance of good in them, endeavouring to make it felt that they have something to lose, and thus prevent their becoming reckless. Express your satisfaction when they speak the truth, and they will feel that a step is gained in your estimation, whilst at the same time the consciousness of having acted right may give such an impulse to their character, as to pave the way for the reception of the principle.

Teachers would do well to consider what are the prevailing vices among the lower classes, and what their peculiar trials, in order to raise a barrier in their pupil's minds against the influences to which they will be exposed. This may be attempted in two ways;—First, by shewing how such vices are condemned by the word of God, and arming them with texts against the hour of temptation: Secondly, by exposing sin in its true and hateful colours, and connecting with it the idea of pain, suffering and future misery. What are the prevailing vices of the day? Nothing is more painfully obtruded on our sight, than the alarming increase of *drum drinking*, extending so often to intoxication. Nor is the vice confined to adults. From their very cradle, the poor children are not only familiarized to the sight of it, but to pacify a cry, supply the want of a meal, or to act as a

bribe, the wretched parents often administer to them without remorse the moral and physical poison. What an appeal to instructors, to "be instant in season and out of season," in fortifying their little scholars against such a temptation. Give them the awful denunciations of the word of God against drunkenness; shew them the odiousness of the vice, and its consequences, robbing man of his highest prerogative, and degrading him to a level with the brutes that perish; bring the subject often before them, and let there be "line upon line, and precept upon precept;" yet forget not to teach them to pity and to pray for those who indulge in the sin.

Sabbath breaking awfully swells the catalogue of national delinquencies. Accustom your pupils to regard Sunday as the Lord's day, that portion of time which He claims for His more immediate service; reiterate the commandments respecting its observance, and lead them to expect a blessing in keeping holy that day which the Lord has blessed. On every Saturday call upon them to tell you how they can spend the Sabbath acceptably to the Lord; on the Monday morning it should be inquired in what manner they have observed the preceding day; do not allow their consciences to go to sleep on this momentous point.

Bad language requires early checking. Its folly

should be exposed and the powerful argument of St. James against it may be made clear to the children's comprehension. What good do they gain? What pleasure? It seems sinning, almost without temptation.

Low gambling and incurring debt are among the trials that early await poor children. To warn them against card-playing, is, to use a common but forcible expression, "shooting over their heads;" the accusation does not reach them, their consciences plead not guilty; but you may shew them that playing at chuck-farthing and other games in which money is lost or won is gambling, and consequently sinful: that by running in debt, they err against the positive command,—“Owe no man anything;” and at the same time lay themselves open to the wicked¹ devices of those who would lead them on to their utter ruin.

¹ In a work entitled, ‘Facts relating to the punishment of death in the metropolis,’ by E. G. Wakefield, we have the most fearful account of the seductions practised on children to lead them into vice. Amongst other means described, the following may furnish a useful hint to Infant-school teachers in their admonitions. ‘Another class of seducers consists of both men and women, but principally of old women, the keepers of fruit-stalls and small cake-shops; which stalls and shops they keep but as a cloak to their real trade,—that of persuading children to become thieves, and receiving goods stolen by children. Residing always on the same spot, and apparently engaged in an honest calling, they have superior opportunities of practising on children, who, until known to them, were perfectly well-disposed. Several instances came to my knowledge, of boys the sons of decent tradespeople, carefully educated, apprenticed to some trade, and with every

Habits of industry have been too little cultivated in Infant Schools; they are very important in a moral point of view; they are the outposts of virtue; it is the idle and unemployed, who most easily fall into sin. There will doubtless be considerable trouble in teaching such little children to

prospect of leading an industrious and honest life, who were seduced by persons of the class in question. The course of seduction is about as follows:—The child buys fruit and cakes at the stall or shop, the keeper of which takes pains to form a familiar acquaintance with him by conversation, artful it must be called in this case, but such as is used by all good teachers, in order to gain a pupil's confidence. He passes the shop one day without money, and is invited to help himself upon trust. If he yield to the first temptation, it is all over with him. Considering his previous acquaintance with the tempter, it is almost a matter of course that he yields. Once in debt, he continues to indulge himself without restraint, and is soon involved far beyond his means of repayment. Where is the police to save him? No act of robbery has been committed, and the police therefore is absent. Probably his parents or master have impressed on him that it is wrong to run in debt. He is already criminal in his own eyes. Instead of confessing his difficulty to his friends, he thinks of them with fear. All his sensations are watched by the wretch, who now begins to talk slightly of harsh parents and taskmasters, and insinuates her own superior affection. By degrees, more or less slow according to the degree of her art, and the excitability of the boy's temperament, she gets a complete mastery of his mind. At length she guides him to the first step in crime, by complaining of want of money; perhaps threatening to apply to his parents, and suggesting that he may easily repay her by taking some trifling article from his master's shop. The first robbery committed, the chances are a thousand to one that the thief will sooner or later be transported or hanged. He goes on robbing his master or perhaps his parents; the woman

work, but as the good that would result is altogether incontrovertible, the labour would be well bestowed. The early exercise of the fingers, when those organs are pliable, would give them strength and dexterity, and the parents being in general very poor, would be greatly pleased to find their little children ready and able to render them help. Several kinds of work might be introduced, as knitting or plating. In France the children in the Infant Schools prepare the lint for the hospitals; and could not the same be done in our Schools? It might not be a bad plan to allow them to thread beads, it would promote dexterity in the movement of their fingers, and they might be practised in discriminating and arranging colours; the younger children could have large beads and few colours; the elder ones smaller, and a variety of shades. The school should be arranged in classes, and the monitor might give to the younger children some such order as,—string two green, three red, one blue. This, in the first instance, would require from them attention, and obedience; to see that they are correct, the work should be examined

disposes of the stolen property, giving him only a moderate share of the money obtained; she introduces him to other boys who are following the same career; he soon learns to prefer idleness and luxuries to labour and plain food; and after awhile, becoming an expert thief, deserts his original seducer, with whom he is no longer willing to share the fruits of his plunder, connects himself with a gang, and is a confirmed robber, on the high road to Botany Bay or the gallows.

before another order is given. The elder party might have a longer order to execute, and to select the shades of colour. This would train them to listen to and obey directions. Such exercises should only be occasional, perhaps once a month. One objection may occur, the exciting a love of finery; but there is not so much fear of this in young children, and as they will have to encounter such temptations at home, it may not be amiss to have an opportunity of exposing the evil of vanity, giving them the right corrective, by recommending the gospel ornament of a "meek and humble spirit."

Delighting as children do in active employments, they would be highly pleased to carry wooden bricks; and at given signals to place them in a certain order.¹ They might also be employed in winding string or measuring distances; in fact, whatever exercises tend to prepare them for manual

¹ The following letter addressed to the editor of the Christian Monitor, might suggest some hints, much in accordance with what has been advanced.

Sir,

Finding a few laths in my cellar the other day, it occurred to me that I might make some use of them in my school. I immediately set to work, and divided them into convenient lengths, some four, some five, and others about six inches. I then split each piece into three, by which means I was furnished with a great number, and I have found them of more real use than many sorts of very expensive apparatus. One lesson, out of many which we make with them, I will endea-

labour, and promote habits of industry, order and activity, are most desirable.

The display so often made in our Infant Schools is much to be deprecated, as an error in moral education. Some half-dozen scholars the most advanced in age or attainment are called out before visitors, and made the little orators of the whole party. Or lessons from memory are repeated which give an appearance of more knowledge than the children really possess. These things should be avoided—every thing should be real. When a teacher puts questions to the children in the gallery he should frequently require those who can answer them to hold up their hands in order to ascertain

your to describe. The children are seated round the walls of the school, and the floor is strewn with these little sticks. I then call out, Pick up one, two, three, or five, as it occurs to me. Then I walk round the school, and take them from every one who has too few or too many, and repeat to them the number they are to pick up, which is all done in a very little time. Sometimes I desire them to hold or join the sticks in all the different directions, or to make with them all the different forms they can think of. At a given signal, they all throw them on the floor, and proceed again in the same manner. Sometimes the school is divided into two parts; the younger proceed as described, while the elder form combinations thus;—pick up two two's three two's, five two's, five three's, twice two two's, &c. &c. The advantage arising from the use of these sticks, is, that it turns to account that activity in the children, which it is so difficult to suppress; it also discovers very readily to the teacher, the individual proficiency of the children.

T. C.

Hackney, May, 1828.*

the actual knowledge of the school. If after a lesson only a very few make the required sign, either the subject is too difficult, or it should be presented in a different manner and more simply or strikingly expressed.

The *moral discipline of the play-ground* is an important feature in the government of an Infant School. There the children have freedom of action, whilst they come in contact with all varieties of disposition. The powerful are tempted to tyrannise, the weak to gain their point by slyness, there in fact, is in miniature, the world in which they are to live and in which they are to carry out their principles. It is to the play-ground that we must look for a means of strengthening the moral character, and promoting moral habits. A careful surveillance should be exercised by the master, but as little direct interference as possible. On returning to the school room he should notice any ebullition of temper, or dereliction from right principles which he may have witnessed; calling upon the children to point out the Scripture precept against which they have transgressed, but at the same time not making them judges of each other; let them condemn the offence, but not the offender, “considering themselves lest they also be tempted.” Besides the opportunity which the time of recreation affords of becoming acquainted with the dispositions of the children and correcting their faults, it gains the teacher

facilities for ingratiating himself with his young pupils, and winning their love, by promoting their little pleasures and sympathising in their troubles; and the hold he thus obtains over their affections, whilst it will render his instructions and admonitions more influential, will be found also to sweeten his own labour.

CHAPTER III.

INTELLECTUAL EDUCATION.

It will be evident where the work of mental education should commence, if we refer to the state of the child when he enters the world,—he has no ideas; his mind is a perfect blank—but how soon are his perceptions awakened, how soon are his senses busily at work!—perhaps there is no period when he collects more information than during the first year of his existence. It is clearly therefore the office of the senses to store the empty mind,—they are the collectors of knowledge. But if children be checked in their inquiries and observations, if their little questions are thought troublesome, or met with indifference, and their natural desire for knowledge repulsed at the very threshold, by ignorance or apathy, they learn to pass over with half-awakened sensations what they see, and to content themselves with incorrect ideas and vague impressions—they see as though they saw not. It is the business of early education to prevent such results—to stimulate into exercise that curiosity and

love of novelty so wisely implanted in the infant mind, and to take care that the senses perform their appointed task of producing correct impressions of the outer world on the mind of the child—for almost in proportion as the senses convey clear, distinct, and right ideas, in after-life will the judgment be sound, and the memory accurate,—if the materials are bad, who can raise a good edifice? That the senses are capable of improvement is manifest from the fact, that where there is the loss of one sense, there is an increased power in the others, acquired from the additional exercise they receive:—how quick, for example, is the sight of the dumb, how delicate the sense of hearing and of touch in the blind. It is in fact by exercise that all our powers are improved. If, then, the education of the mind commence with the senses, if they are capable of improvement by exercise, and if the after mental progress will materially depend upon the ideas gained, and the habits formed in childhood, it is most important to consider in what way education can make good this first step.

Nature, our great Teacher, points out how we may carry on the work effectually. We are to commence as she does by cultivating the different senses of the infant, through the means of real tangible objects. Thus let the sight be trained to determine colour, size, form, distance, number; let the ear be exercised in different kinds of sounds, and their degrees of intensity, in determining vari-

ous substances by the sounds they produce; in like manner, let the other senses be brought into activity, by presenting them with appropriate objects. The judgments of the children must be subsequently corrected, by appeals to their senses, and they must learn to express accurately what they have observed correctly. Here is the great business of infant education, and so far the rich and the poor require to be treated alike; a correct acquaintance with the world they live in is equally essential to both, and whilst such training will form the useful mechanic, and the observant labourer, it will no less prove the basis of scientific research and philosophical reasoning in those whose subsequent education is directed to such pursuits. Infant School teachers should always bear in mind, that with respect to intellectual culture, their one great object must be *to exercise and to improve the senses.*

To attain this end, lessons on objects should form a prominent feature in all Infant Schools; at first the selection might be miscellaneous, but in every lesson the teacher should have some definite aim. The children should examine the objects presented to them; and any simple experiment¹ which renders their qualities obvious, should be performed in their sight; they should then be called upon to mention their qualities, parts, (if the

¹ Such as dissolving sugar or gum in water, putting vinegar to chalk to shew how it effervesces.

object has any peculiar parts) and uses ; to discover what qualities fit them for their particular uses—occasionally having their attention directed by a question, but never having a name given to them till they feel their need of it.¹ The name will not communicate to a child the original idea,² but the idea being formed by means of perception, a name fixes it upon the memory, and is the means of communication with others. Children derive little pleasure from words, whilst they are all activity when called to observe things ; the reason is obvious, words are only the signs of ideas, and there must be a clear notion of the thing signified before the sign can be of use.

In commencing a course of lessons on objects, the first substance chosen should be one in which some quality exists in a striking degree ; the cause, it may be, of its usefulness,—as in glass, transparency ; or in sugar, sweetness. Care should be taken in the course of a few days, to present a different object in which the same quality is obvious, that the abstract idea may be formed. In this way a series of objects should be brought before the

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¹ If the child have learned to come from real objects to words, he will be able likewise to conclude from words to real objects ; but real objects must lay the foundation. Words as mere sounds, can have but a subordinate influence upon instruction, and therefore, precious as they are for the communication of knowledge between man and man, yet they ought never to be used for this purpose, before the child is perfectly acquainted with their value.—*Dr. Biber.*

children, for the purpose of making them acquainted with all the several qualities cognizable by their external senses. This plan has been adopted in the first series of 'Lessons on Objects;' and might be carried out to a greater extent; but teachers should endeavour fully to understand the principle upon which these, or any other model lessons are formed, otherwise they will be continually making mistakes in the application of them, and be unable to carry them out with effect.

Much interest would be excited, if little collections of natural and artificial objects were to be formed in every Infant School; a few specimens of the foreign productions in common use, or of such as are mentioned in scripture might be purchased, but for the remainder the children might be encouraged to bring objects for their lessons; this would lead them to take an interest in the productions of their own neighbourhood and to search for information respecting them. If the locality be the sea-side, they would find shells, pebbles, sea-weed, shell-fish, &c. If a manufacturing town, the articles made there, and the raw material would be easily procured. Every place, in fact, presents objects of interest to the inquiring mind; but we are too apt to pass over what we commonly see, not allowing our attention to be sufficiently arrested for the mind to obtain clear impressions.

¹ 'For want of such habits being formed in early life, the bulk of mankind know neither the proper use of their sen-

Colour soon attracts the observation of children, and a series of very interesting lessons might be formed upon this subject. A colour should be exhibited to the children, and when the idea of it is formed in their minds, they should be taught, to connect with it the right name. The next step should be, to call upon them to mention what they see before them of that particular colour, so that their sight may be well exercised in discriminating the one learnt, from others; afterwards they should be required to name objects, from recollection, of the colour in question—this will tend to form the abstract idea, and will also furnish the

sitive organs, nor are qualified to deduce proper conclusions from the objects to which they are occasionally directed; but pass through life without any rational application of the senses and faculties with which they are furnished. Is there one out of ten that has ascertained from his own observation, that the starry heavens perform an apparent revolution round the earth every twenty-four hours, around a certain fixed point called a pole? Is there one out of twenty that can tell at what season of the year the new moon will appear at a high elevation above the horizon, and when the full moon will appear high or low? And yet these facts may be ascertained without the least difficulty, by a simple application of the organ of vision to the respective objects, combined with a desire to know the results. The same position might be illustrated in thousands of similar instances, where the grossest ignorance prevails in relation to multitudes, which might have been prevented by a rational use of the sensitive organs with which the Creator has endowed us. Now in Infant-schools, children should be trained to a proper application of their sensitive powers, presented with suitable objects, on which they may be exercised, and taught to deduce from them useful truths with their practical application.

teacher with an opportunity of cultivating accuracy of observation and propriety of expression. For example, ask them to think of something *red*—they will perhaps mention the robin-redbreast. Ask them, ‘is that quite correct—is the robin red all over?’ ‘No—it has a red breast.’ ‘Then what should you have said?’ ‘The robin has a red breast?’ Again, ‘tell me something that is green.’ ‘Leaves are green.’ ‘Are they always green?’ ‘No.’ ‘When are they green?’ ‘In Spring.’ ‘Then what should you have said?’ ‘Leaves are green in Spring.’ Such exercises would lead them to think before they speak, and to express themselves with accuracy and in strict adherence to truth, whilst they may be made highly interesting. For commencing lessons on colour a few wafers on a card will be sufficient, one being added when a new colour is brought before the children. But they might also be practised in learning the various shades of colour and their degrees of intensity, for which purpose colours may be painted on slips of card, and kept as standards to be referred to—at the same time the proper names for each should be learnt, as apple-green, grass-green, chocolate-brown, &c. Whenever they receive a lesson upon a flower, or a stone, or any other coloured object, they should be called upon to determine its precise hue. A cake of each of the primitive colours, red, blue, and yellow, might be kept in the school, and it should be made evident to the children how all other colours may

be produced by their combination in different proportions. It is not sufficient that they are simply shewn two colours, and then told what they will produce if mixed together. This kind of instruction is of little or no value, for the knowledge of the fact, even if remembered, is but of minor importance to the children; it is having had their powers of observation called out, and exercised, which constitutes the real value of the lesson; and this is a point but too little understood by teachers.

Exercises on colour greatly interest children, and improve their organs of vision—whilst in after life they are often placed in situations where the accurate perception of colour is of great advantage. How useful is it to the painter, the gardener, the haberdasher; how convenient that servants should be able to match colours well; and let us not confine our view to selfish considerations merely—is it nothing to have increased the sphere of innocent gratification to our fellow-creatures; to have administered to their pleasure by making them more alive to the ever-varying hues in which nature is drest?

Form is one of the most striking properties of matter. Regular lessons ought to be given on this subject, but in doing so the object should not be to teach the science, or even the technicalities of geometry, but simply to improve in the children the faculty for perceiving elementary forms, and, it may be, afterwards to practise their hands in imitating them. There can be no doubt as to

the utility of such instruction, if we only consider that in the humbler walks of life there is scarcely any vocation in which a knowledge of form is not a most useful, if not an indispensable acquirement. The plan pursued in leading to the observation of the other qualities of matter, should be adopted. Form should be studied where it really exists, in the bodies themselves: but as in nature it is in general complicated, it is best that the children should in the first instance be practised upon some simple, regular solids, made either of chalk or wood. A solid being presented for their inspection, according to the plan suggested in the lessons on colours, they should be required to look around, and point out where they see any thing of a similar shape, then to name a similar shape from recollection. In succeeding lessons, they may be exercised in discovering and describing the peculiar shapes of the different solids, leading them to an acquaintance with the boundaries, as surfaces, edges, angles, &c. Afterwards, they may be shown their representations in figures, and learn the different properties of lines and angles; they may then be called upon to discover what they can do with one line—as lengthen it at either or both ends, shorten it, efface it; how they can place two lines with respect to each other; they may be parallel—they may converge—cross, &c. Their observation of relative position should be directed to what is within their view, indeed, as much as

possible, all their knowledge should be made practical, and to bear on the scenes and objects by which they are surrounded ; thus they should be led to remark the position of the walls of their school-room, with respect to the floor, the floor with respect to the ceiling, &c. and also the relative position of the different parts of their own bodies.

Another useful exercise is to accustom children to determine the sizes of things ; teach them the length of an inch, a foot, a yard ; frequently measure things before them until they have a tolerably accurate idea of their lengths ; then call for their opinion on the length and height of an object, beginning with small things ; and in order that they may be able to correct their judgment, measure before them, or allow them to measure, whatever they have thus given their opinion upon. In addition to the absolute dimensions of surrounding objects, they may also be exercised in determining their *relative proportions* ; thus, what proportion our nails bear to our fingers—our fingers to our arms—the windows and doors to the height of the room, &c.

Amongst the elder pupils, a little drawing with chalk might be advantageously introduced, teaching them to make straight lines in different directions, angles of different sizes, and connecting them, so as to form different figures, the eye having been previously well exercised in determining absolute and relative dimensions.

The want of arrangement and system in these lessons, as well as in others given in Infant Schools, has been a great error; each lesson stands insulated, the whole instruction resembling a piece of patchwork; the consequence of this defective mode of teaching is, that the children do not enjoy the satisfaction of feeling that they are making progress, and the knowledge or power they gain not being quickly followed up and strengthened, fades away and is lost; whereas if a regular and graduated course were adopted, the materials would be rightly placed in the mind, and they would also be trained to enjoy order and arrangement. Instruction in form has also been made quite ludicrous by teaching the children to sing the terms *horizontal*, *perpendicular*, &c. I may add, it would be a very great improvement if these hard-sounding epithets, which seem always to be connected in our minds with science, could be exchanged for some simple significant names; the ideas they are intended to convey being quite within a very young child's comprehension, and belonging, in an especial manner, to the practical business of his after life.

Lessons upon *arithmetic* should begin with visible objects, that through the medium of their senses children may obtain accurate ideas of number before they attempt their combinations. To facilitate this, the frame of balls called the *Arithmometer*, is very useful: it presents the children with a visible representation of number, and enables them to com-

pare and combine for themselves. When they have acquired the knowledge and names of numbers, they must be taught to apply them to all they see around, and find examples in their own persons or in the room. They should next be exercised in mental arithmetic, using the arithmometer to correct any error they may make, or to help them through any difficult solution. Every step should be made clear to the children by this instrument, whilst the results of the arithmetical combinations which they make should be fixed in their memories by repetition and continual questions. Very different is the use made of the arithmometer in many schools, where the teachers rapidly move the balls along whilst the infants shout out their multiplication table, of course one or two of the elder ones taking the lead, whilst the rest mechanically chime in without any effort of attention or memory. Equally bad is the system of singing the different tables of weights and measures. The plea is, that they are required to know such things, and learn them in this way without trouble; but if they are once acquainted with real nature of numbers, and have acquired facility in carrying on their various combinations in the head, they will easily gain all that is needed for the business of life;¹ and this habit of chanting or

¹ " I know that the child cannot do without that knowledge, but this does not prove that it is the first thing to be imparted. The mode of teaching number upon its internal laws, so far from unfitting the child for any application of number, to what

singing lessons lulls the mind into such a drowsy inertness, that all the benefit to be derived from arithmetical exercises is defeated. Mere hints on subjects such as form or number must be insufficient to direct teachers, but they will find much valuable help, in 'Lessons on Number,' and 'Lessons on Form,' published by Taylor, Gower Street.

Since children must hear the names of different countries, and in their Bibles read much of other lands, it is very desirable that these names should call up in their minds some definite ideas. How is this to be accomplished? A map, as it is generally used, altogether fails to convey to infant minds what it is intended to represent. The first questions which the teacher should ask himself are, what ideas have the class received—what do they know—what have they already comprehended at all like what I wish them to know and compre-

is called the practical purposes of life, will, on the contrary, give him, even, for this inferior object, greater skill and ability. It will be very easy for a child familiar with number, in its nature and various relations, to acquire a knowledge of all those matters of convention; whereas too early an acquaintance with these latter is calculated to divert him from the perception of the former."

¹ Those who are unaccustomed to talk with children and uneducated persons, are little aware of the confusion that exists in their minds as to the relative situation of places they have never visited. A little child was reading one day the account of the miraculous draught of fishes, and struck with the disciples having toiled all night and caught nothing, she turned round, and exclaimed with some naiveté, 'Pray why did they not come up to London bridge to get some?'

hend? What, for example, does the class know of *place* that may be regarded as a foundation on which to rest further knowledge of *place*? They know that part of the earth on which they live, and the school-room in which they are receiving daily instruction. Here, then, is the point from which to start. After having taught them to determine the cardinal points, which is easily effected by leading them to observe where the sun rises and where it sets, and pointing out to them that that part of the heavens where they first see the sun in the morning, is called the east, and that part where they lose sight of it in the evening the west; and that if they stand with their right hand to the east, the north will be opposite to them and the south behind them. A few little conversational exercises requiring them to mention what things they can see on the north, what on the south, &c., will fix this preliminary step in their minds. Then propose to draw a map or plan of what they are all acquainted with, the school and its immediate vicinity. As they know the cardinal points on the horizon, you must shew them where they are represented on a map; and if you only tell them that the east is always placed on the right hand side, they will be able from their previous lesson to find out the other points. Put a mark in the centre of the slate for the school; then ask, 'what is to the north of the school-room?' 'The street.'—'Where then must I make a mark for the street?' 'At

the top.'—'What is to the south of the school-room?' 'The play-ground.'—'Where is it to be placed on the map?' 'At the bottom,' &c. •At the next lesson, or very shortly, the geographical sphere may be extended to the neighbourhood, as the church, the workhouse, &c. determining their distances from each other and relative position, marking them down accordingly. The next lesson may embrace the neighbouring villages, the course of some river, hills, or whatever the locality may present. Thus the children would see on the slate something like a picture of their neighbourhood, and be prepared to form a conception of the real nature and use of a map, and to derive information from the sight of one representing countries unknown to them; in this manner according to the excellent rule of the venerable Pestalozzi, they are "led from the known to the unknown,"—the first stepping-stone being the child's own experience. Having proceeded thus far, you must not afterwards let the geographical lessons consist of a list of names, the capital towns of countries of which they have no distinct idea, but lead the children to feel an interest in the place, before they learn where it is situated. Suppose you design to give them a little instruction about their own country; bring before them a skeleton map and fill it up as they become interested in the different towns or places; first marking on the map the spot where they reside. For instance

have they had a lesson on cotton, learnt something about it in its natural state, and heard that cotton goods, the frocks they wear, are manufactured at Manchester? They associate a definite idea with this town, and will be pleased to see where it is to be put on the map, and what is its relative position with regard to the place where they reside. In this manner they may become acquainted with their own country, and not with its remarkable towns only, but with its natural productions, such as coal fields, salt mines, iron ores, &c. Propose to them, as they advance, to make little imaginary tours, and to tell you what towns they would pass through in going, for example, from London to Liverpool; what rivers they would cross, what natural productions in particular they would see. The map of Palestine might in a similar manner be filled up as they hear about the different places mentioned in Scripture; and the physical nature of that country might be described to them, to illustrate the histories of the Bible. A globe should also be introduced to the children's notice, that they may form a right idea of the relative position and size of our island, and learn something of the countries that supply us with our different comforts. It would be also desirable to instruct them in the spread of Christianity, and to point out the lands that yet sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, endeavouring to awaken in their minds an interest in missionary labours, by giving them such

details as would lead to a due appreciation of the blessings they enjoy and a sympathy in the state of heathen countries. The geography of animals would likewise be interesting, as it presents some facts strikingly illustrative of that gracious providence, which alloweth not a sparrow to descend unheeded to the ground. Where do we find the elephant—an animal capable of consuming from 150 to 200 lbs. of food in a day? In countries redundant with vegetation.—Where the carnivorous lion and tiger?—In countries unfit for man's residence, in almost impassable jungles, and beneath the heat of tropical suns.—Where the faithful dog, the friend of man? In every clime; for he possesses, like many other of our valuable domestic animals, a constitution that becomes naturalized wherever he is carried. •

Still more interesting and important than the knowledge of the relative position of the places of the earth, is an acquaintance with its productions. In this study, children should be led to distinguish the three great kingdoms of nature. Each of these should form materials for a different course of lessons: by all means avoid the affectation of treating them scientifically; little children have nothing to do with science, and it has been a great mistake to talk of teaching them botany, mineralogy, zoology, &c. An acquaintance with useful facts is valuable to all ages and all ranks; but science belongs only to those whose reasoning powers have been deve-

loped. Whilst therefore a lesson on a flower, an insect, or a mineral in common use, may most profitably exercise the perceptive faculties of children, train them to habitual observation, and lead them to admire the wisdom and the goodness that formed them, let not such simple instruction draw down ridicule by giving it the name of a science.

Lessons on natural objects should commence with what is in immediate contact with the children, with that which they themselves observe;—and when it is wished to extend their knowledge, it will be found that if they have been accustomed to make accurate observations and to give correct descriptions of what they have seen, they will be prepared to understand the accounts of foreign productions, if only told how far they differ, and how far they resemble those of which they have formed clear and distinct ideas.

On this principle you cannot do better in commencing your *instruction on animals* than to direct the attention of the children to their own figure,—and when they have become well acquainted with their organs, as to their form, position, and uses, lead them to compare their own organs with the organs of other animals—to observe the difference in structure—to consider why they are so differently constructed, that they may perceive how every animal is furnished by his Creator with just what he needs! in fact, accustom them always to expect that there must be a wise and benevolent reason for

every variation they find. Their curiosity will thus be excited when they perceive any peculiarity in an animal, to know for what purpose it is designed.—Let them, whenever it is possible, find this out for themselves. As an example of such instruction, suppose the lesson is on the human nose; having required them to consider its parts, the bridge, nostrils, tip, sides, wings, &c.; next, its position—in the centre of the face, below the forehead; above the mouth, between the cheeks; then its form; lead them next to compare it with the same organ in other animals. Take first one familiar to them. What is this organ in a pig? A snout.—What sort of snout? Long. What has it at the end? If they cannot answer this question, stimulate them to make the discovery, and defer the continuation of the lesson till the next day, when, most likely, several will have found out that the pig's snout terminates in a ring of gristle. Next should follow the consideration of the use made of this organ by man and by pigs, and its fitness for their different habits. What is the use of your nose to you? What do you do with it? Breathe through it, and smell with it.—What must you do when you wish to smell anything? Bring it to the nose.—How? By the hand; leading them to perceive the necessity of hands to man from his erect position.—But of what use is the pig's snout? He breathes with it.—What besides? He grubs up his food, roots, &c.—How is it fitted for this work?

It is long, flexible,¹ and has a ring of gristle at the end. They may then be led to consider the extraordinary adaptation of this organ to a very different state of circumstances in a foreign animal which probably they all have seen, at least in a picture. What is this organ in an elephant? A trunk.—What kind of thing is the trunk? It is a very long, flexible snout. They will not perhaps know to what use the elephant applies his trunk, but by questioning may be brought to know that he has the power of raising it in the air, curling it about the branches of the trees, and snapping them off; that he also twists it round the herbage on the ground, tears it up, and then conveys with the aid of this instrument, the vegetable food to his mouth. If it be absolutely necessary to describe to them the habits of an animal, they can still be left to make the application of the information given, and find out how the organ and the peculiar habits are adapted to each other. You may also proceed a step farther, and draw from them the conclusion that He who made these animals, appointed the bounds of their habitation, implanted their instincts, and gave them organs in accordance with them, must be as benevolent as he is powerful. If by such exercises children are trained to observe attentively and accurately, and then to reason upon the knowledge

¹ It is supposed that Lessons on Objects will precede those on natural history, and consequently that the children will be familiar with the quality of flexibility.

acquired, their minds are really educated. It will, no doubt, have cost considerable thought and trouble; a teacher might in the same space of time, have told them a great deal, and perhaps have made them *appear* much more clever, but information received with little exercise of the mind soon fades away; whereas habits formed, and power acquired are permanent. In training them to think justly, you also do much towards furnishing them with a preservative against error; for though you may not have exercised them on any very important matters, yet with minds early accustomed to form a right judgment, and to reason correctly on one subject, they will be prepared to do so on another; and will more easily detect the fallacy of the infidel opinions and demoralizing views, which are now continually brought before the poorer, as well as the richer classes of society.

In your regular course of lessons on animals, you should begin with those common ones which are seen every day: what better subject than the domestic cat, the type or representative of that fearful race, the feline tribe? Lead the children to observe the sharp-pointed teeth, the curiously formed eye, the long whiskers, the soft cushioned paws, armed with retractile claws, the slender flexible body. Bring to their recollection its peculiar movements, its cautious stealthy walk, when approaching its prey; its sudden leap, its elasticity and power of adjusting its body, when descending from

a height so as to alight upon its soft-cushioned paws, and give its frame no jar ;¹ its food—animals—which it tears with its sharp teeth, and still farther masticates with its rough tongue ; its claws carefully sheathed when at play with its kittens, but proving a sharp instrument, when protuded to strike its poor little victims. All these traits are also characteristics of the tiger and its congeners ; and a lesson on a cat, which children can examine themselves, will prepare them readily, with the help of pictures, to form a clear idea of the scourge of the jungle, and they will listen with increased interest, to any anecdotes, illustrative of its habits and character. ‘ ‘

Lessons on plants should always be carried on in the summer months, when all the parts of a plant may be seen, and the children should be encouraged to bring specimens. When you propose to give them a lesson, begin with the root ; ask them to bring all the different kinds of roots they can collect : make them find out the different parts of a root,—its use to the plant—lead them to observe, and describe the forms of the different roots which they have brought, and require them to give you a list of those that are eaten ; then shew them how the wonderful providence of God is displayed in the root, as in every other part of the vegetable :

¹ From hence the common sayings, A cat always falls on its legs ; and a cat has nine lives.

how beautifully it is formed to preserve the plant in its right position, throwing out longer fibres, as the head increases in dimensions, and so acting as a counterpoise to the weight of the top; how admirable the compensation made to plants for their inability to move about, by giving them many mouths, while animals endowed with the power of locomotion, have only one: and how beautiful the provision, that these vegetable mouths, which are sponge-like substances, fitted to absorb moisture, are placed at the extremities of fibres, that are always pressing out in every direction beyond the shelter of the foliage of the plant, to reach the moisture not found under it. The knowledge of such facts, shewing the good providence of the Creator extended to all his works, and proving that every part of nature bears the impress of divine wisdom, are within the reach of all who will exercise a little observation.

The minerals in common use, as coal, salt, chalk, and the metals, should be occasionally the subjects of lessons; and the children should be particularly led to feel an interest in what their own locality affords.

It would be as well perhaps, for the child, if learning to *read* were not attempted in Infant Schools; yet, as the parents in general appreciate very little the development of the intellectual powers, or the formation of moral and religious principles, but look rather to some positive tan-

gible acquirement, it may be desirable to meet their feelings : a still more cogent reason for teaching to read so early, is, that in many instances a child has no other instruction than that which he receives at an Infant School. The great object, should be to adopt some method that will smooth difficulties, and render the task as little wearisome as possible. In the plans of teaching to read, generally pursued, all is arbitrary and uncongenial to the tastes of children. It is indeed true, that the symbols chosen to represent sounds, must of necessity, in the first instance be arbitrary ; but then their combinations need not be so. Thus, according to the usual mode of teaching, a child first learns the¹ names of the letters ; this helps him but little, for when in the next step he is called upon to put them together, the syllable they are to form, is not really the sound produced by their combination, so that this process is also arbitrary ; he receives on the authority of the teacher, that such letters form such a word, and this is to be committed to memory. Thus he says, d-o-g, and

¹ As it is usually managed, it is a dreadful task indeed to learn, and, if possible, a more dreadful task to teach to read : with the help of counters, and coaxing and ginger-bread, or by dint of reiterated pain and terror, the names of the four and twenty letters, are in the course of some weeks firmly fixed in the pupil's memory. So much the worse ; all these names will disturb him if he have common sense, and at every step must stop his progress.—*Miss Edgeworth's Practical Education.*

then is told, that these letters spell dog. On the plan we would recommend, the child should be taught the power of the letters, (that is, the sound that they have, when combined) and the syllabic terminations.¹ A child instructed on this plan when he sees the letter d, calls it, according to the French, de, and having learnt the termination og, when he is directed to put the two sounds together, will of course say, dog.* He is pleased to find, that By combining two sounds, he has himself formed a word with which he is familiar. Language is thus reduced to its simple elements, the child is first made acquainted with the symbols of its primitive sounds, and when he combines them, which he finds no difficulty in doing, he enjoys a real pleasure, he has done something that he feels is correct, and there is a satisfaction in the act. It is not an unimportant consideration, that teaching to read upon these principles, corrects the ear in its judgment of sound. The first reading lessons should be as simple as the children's conversation, and no attempt made to communicate knowledge by reading, until they have acquired some facility in the art.

With respect to *grammar*, it does not appear at all a subject for Infant Schools, it is too abstract a science for early instruction; and if the children

¹ This plan is followed in the Model Infant School, Gray's-Inn Road, and the lessons used are called 'Reading disentangled.'

learn it, they only do so as parrots, a custom very much to be deprecated : it is of no benefit to their minds, and enables them to make a display very detrimental to their moral character. It would, however, be very desirable, if the teachers studied it themselves, and were enabled to correct the grammatical errors of their pupils, and also their wrong pronunciation of words.

The elliptical mode of teaching, which requires the children to fill up any important word in a sentence, has been much adopted in some Infant Schools ; its principal advantages are, that it enables an instructor to lead his pupils along a simple train of reasoning, and to arrest their attention and carry them with him through a narrative ; and also by obliging them to seek for the appropriate expression they have to supply, it helps them to acquire a rich vocabulary, and to obtain fluency and readiness in expressing themselves. But teachers should recollect that they will not by such a mode of instruction train a child to think or reflect : what he ought to say is suggested to him, and after a little practice a very superficial attention will enable him to guess a word which the tenor of the sentence points out. One way in which it may be very profitably used, is when a teacher is summing up a lesson : he can then go over the ground again, and gather up what has been elicited on the subject ; leaving the school simultaneously to supply what they have learnt,

which he suggests in proper order, and without the collateral subjects which may have been introduced by way of illustration.

Before leaving the subject of intellectual education, it will perhaps be desirable to meet the objections of some, who may be inclined to ask, Of what advantage is so much knowledge? We answer, it is neither the variety of knowledge, nor the quantity of information gained, that is the object; this can at best be but a very minor consideration in an Infant School; it is the power of perception, correctness of judgment, the general intelligence, acquired by such training, that is really valuable. How much is a workman of observation and ingenuity prized; one who can follow out an idea given, who has mind to comprehend suggestions, and ability to carry them into practice. How superior is the domestic servant, who does not like a slave merely obey your orders, but can enter into the spirit of the directions given, and meet promptly any change of circumstances,—one with whom you can trust your children, without fear of injury either to their morals or manners, who having a mind well stored with the narratives of Scripture, and with facts in natural history, illustrative of the goodness and wisdom of the Creator, need not have recourse to idle stories for their amusement. And why is all this so rare? Is it not because the education of the poorer classes has been so neglected, and when undertaken, so un-

fitted for their station and its duties. It is not filling the memories of children with lessons, giving them the rules of arithmetic as a mechanical operation, teaching them to read without any exercise of thought, that will accomplish what is desired : they must be trained to the right use of their senses, and to draw correct conclusions from what they observe ; they must be educated more upon things, and less upon books, and whilst instructed in the doctrines and precepts of the Bible, they must be made to feel that they are of daily application, and through the power of the Holy Ghost, a living principle, not a dead letter. By such an education, they will be prepared for a life of usefulness to themselves and others, and have sources of pleasure within their reach, which may preserve them from lower gratifications.

CHAPTER IV.,

PHYSICAL EDUCATION.

MUCH attention ought to be paid to the *physical state* of the children in Infant Schools; not only is it important, because the seeds of many diseases spring up from early neglect, but the state of the moral feelings and intellectual powers are closely connected with the well-being of the bodily frame. The limbs and muscles, are to be strengthened by exercises, which should be so varied, that all the muscles may be brought into play, and acquire vigour. It is the custom in Infant Schools, to introduce marching, and various evolutions such as clapping hands, stamping the feet, &c. The advantages of these exercises are two-fold; first, as prompt and full obedience can be more easily obtained to a physical, than moral act, it is, the best plan that can be adopted for producing order and promoting discipline. Secondly, it is essential to the health of little children, that they should not remain long in one position. God does not bestow upon them, a propensity to continual

restlessness, but with a view to their good, and this should be our guide in the manner of treating it. Whilst however an Infant School would be fundamentally defective, in which such exercises were omitted, it should be recollected for what object they are introduced ; in some schools they are carried to such an excess, that instead of being an occasional relief, when the spirits flag, or the body is weary, they become the cause of continual excitement and bustle, and the school-room is, in fact, little better than a play-ground. This is an error into which teachers are apt to fall, who do not know how to employ the minds of their pupils, and are incompetent to carry on effectually the work they have undertaken.

I was forcibly struck with the abuse of these exercises on visiting a school, on a hot morning last summer ; I found all bustle and motion, marching about, clapping hands, singing or chaunting lessons ; it was even a fatigue to witness the restless scene, and still more distressing to consider how injurious, physically and morally, to the poor little performers. When the attention of the children begins to flag, and their bodies become uneasy by continuing too long in one position, manual exercises or a lively tune remedies the evil, and prepares them to enter with spirit and animation on their next occupation ; it is the abuse, and not the use of such things that is to be reprobated.

With regard to the *organs of sense*, the means

of their improvement have been shewn in treating of the intellectual powers as the avenues of knowledge; it need only be added, that they are all susceptible of improvement, and that it is to be effected by their right exercise.

Singing, whilst it is a physical exercise, is a great moral engine; it acts strongly upon the feelings, and the main object in its use should be to excite religious and moral sentiments. In its sweeter strains it softens and calms the tone of feeling, and is therefore admirably adapted to prepare the mind for religious worship, whilst lively and animated airs may be called in to excite cheerful gratitude and kindly affection. Music, is sadly misemployed when called in as an auxiliary to mental exercises—when, for example, attempts are made to teach geometry, geography, grammar, or arithmetic by means of singing. Besides that there is something ridiculous in making a play of such subjects, let any sensible teacher observe the effect of singing upon his pupils; it does not excite the intellectual powers; but according to the character of the tune, it either lulls the mind into listless inactivity, or produces a sort of physical excitement. Its province is not with the mind, but with the feelings and the heart, and it should be used accordingly.

Singing may be made very useful in promoting patriotic and loyal sentiments. All know the effect that their national air has upon the Swiss;

and why should not English children be excited by an early acquaintance with their national airs, to cherish similar feelings, to have their hearts glow with love and devotion to a country, to which they should consider it a blessing to belong? such sentiments are ennobling and ought to be cultivated. Nothing perhaps would go farther to counteract the discontented murmuring spirit now creeping in amongst the poorer classes, than to have their earliest associations with the name of their native land those of grateful praise and rejoicing.

Attention to cleanliness is very essential, as the skin is the organ by which insensible perspiration is carried on, any thing which obstructs this necessarily affects the bodily health. Teachers, therefore, should not only exhibit in themselves, and recommend neatness and cleanliness, but should require it systematically in the children, endeavouring by precept and example to give them habits that may continue after they leave school, and throughout their future lives.

CHAPTER V.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

BEFORE closing these remarks it may not be unprofitable to address a few words to Teachers. You have undertaken a work of great difficulty and high responsibility, one perhaps, which if it had been fully appreciated you would scarcely have considered yourselves competent to fill : nevertheless, be not discouraged, you yet may do much by industry to qualify yourselves for the duty you have engaged in, but especially seek strength, seek grace, seek direction from above : do your work as unto the Lord, and he will reward you : be much in prayer ; not only seek a blessing when you enter upon your daily labours, but seek it continually in your labours ; bring your difficulties, your disappointments, your failures *at the time* to your Saviour ; one moment's communion with him may relieve you of your burden, and give you strength and courage to proceed aright. • Carefully

watch over your spirit, cultivate a humble frame of mind, remember that it is the Holy Spirit that can alone give light, and bless your work, and therefore in all that you do, seek and depend upon his help, place this truth also continually before your scholars, that they may early know where to look for aid. Examine frequently the principles and motives upon which you are acting, bring them to the test of scripture, and keep a strict guard upon your temper, for it will be much tried. Sow the good seed carefully, preparing well the soil, and trust to the Lord, that he will, when he sees fit, bless it to his own glory. Avail yourselves of every opportunity of acquiring knowledge that may prove useful to you in teaching. Whenever you meet with what appears valuable information, note it down for future use. The questions of children often lead us to see our own ignorance; let them also lead you to seek for knowledge upon points in which they prove you are deficient: consider that your work is by no means over when the school-room doors are closed; your evenings should be devoted to self-improvement and to preparing materials for the next day. It is very important before entering upon your work, that you carefully arrange the instruction you propose giving, that it may be ready to be produced when required: if you do not attend to this point, you will either go over your old lessons day after day, till they have lost all freshness and interest, both with yourselves and

your scholars, or if depending upon your own resources, you leave it for the moment a lesson is to be given, to decide what the subject shall be and how it shall be treated; your mind will be occupied in these matters, when it ought to be free to watch your pupils, and to keep up their attention; if visitors come in, you will lose your self-possession, and forget what you ought to be doing. It is therefore strongly recommended that you should review every evening the state of the school during the past day, consider what plans seemed to succeed, what to fail, then endeavour to gain something for future use, at the same time determine what lessons are to be given on the morrow: what aim you propose in the lessons, and how you ought to treat them. If you find your pupils not improving, getting disorderly, inattentive, &c. do not become angry with them, but look for the fault in yourselves; there has been, you may be assured, something deficient in your teaching or your discipline; if you allow yourselves to get out of humour with the children, the evil will only increase; if on the contrary you look to yourselves as the cause of what is wrong, you will try some new lesson, something more interesting, you will use gentleness, instead of harshness, and seeking a strength not your own, the school will no doubt soon recover its usual tone.

Punishment should be resorted to as seldom as possible, it is an evil, though sometimes a neces-

sary one, as well for the sake of example, as to subdue a bad spirit that may be gaining ground, but recollect that its office is not to stimulate to right, but to prevent the recurrence of wrong conduct. There cannot be a greater proof that a school is badly managed than the necessity of frequent punishment.

Let your punishment seem as much as possible the consequence of a fault: this is in analogy with God's dealings with us, for he makes us to reap the fruit of our doings. The quarrelsome child must be separated from his companion, until the loss of the pleasure of society leads him to put a restraint upon himself. An idle child is not unfrequently corrected by remaining for some time without any occupation or amusement. But it is necessary to study the dispositions of those committed to your charge, and to watch narrowly the effect of any chastisement. If the plan you have tried, produce evil, you must discontinue it. Beware of exposing a child to the ridicule of its companions—for you will either make him daring or sullen, whilst you tempt the other children to sin against the Christian rule, “not to rejoice in evil.” Though you should always exercise a kind gentle manner towards infants, yet they should also be made to perceive and feel that you must be promptly obeyed.—Children always struggle for the mastery, often unconsciously to themselves; they must be shewn by your determined, though gentle tone and man-

ner, that you intend to govern and to be implicitly obeyed. If you hold the reins tight in your hands during the school hours, you will be able to relax in the times of recreation, and allow considerable liberty. There is generally little punishment requisite, where a strict, uniform, yet kind discipline, is kept up; and children are much happier, when the point is settled for them, and the temptation to disobedience done away.

Lastly, Never punish a child when you are irritated with him, as he will be much more inclined to attribute the pain he suffers to your temper, than to his own misconduct. When you are convinced that punishment is necessary, let it be evident that it is (what it ought to be) a grief to you to inflict it. Imitate the example of your heavenly Father, who afflicteth not willingly the children of men, but chastiseth in love.

Study simplicity not only in your language, by using the most plain words, but also in the manner in which you present a subject to the children; this should be natural and easy, setting before them one difficulty only at a time. Whatever injury may have been done to children, it has seldom arisen from commencing intellectual culture too early, for their minds are always in activity; but from having called forth this activity on subjects unsuitable to their age, and still more perhaps from presenting to them more than one difficulty at a time, this causes a perplexity and distress peculiarly injurious

to the delicately-constituted minds of infants. On this ground, teaching children to count by balls of various colours, under the idea of practising their eyes upon colour, whilst they are also learning arithmetic, is decidedly objectionable; it is quite sufficient labour for a child at one time to be practised upon sounds and their symbols; and on the same principle *early* reading lessons which require any exercise of thought are to be avoided. When the difficulty to be overcome is mechanical, do not in the same lesson attempt an intellectual exercise; the relief afforded by a complete change in the character of their studies, is very essential to the mental and physical health of children.

Carefully avoid making a show of any particular pupil—never let one take too prominent a part and be called upon to display his little powers; and do not excite a spirit of emulation in your school, for in its train inevitably follow, vanity, envy, and ill-will; this is sacrificing moral to intellectual improvement, and is a fearful mistake in education, which has disfigured some of our best Infant Schools. Emulation is indeed a powerful engine, a school may easily be kept alive, and stimulated to great exertions by its aid; but recollect that it is not a christian engine, and good cannot eventually result from its use. The great means by which the mental, moral, and physical powers are to be improved, is by *exercise*; this has been well set forth in a modern work on education, with an

extract from which, and an earnest prayer for the Divine blessing on your labours, I shall close these remarks,—“ The law of exercise is of universal application. It is a fundamental law of nature, that all the capacities of man are enlarged and strengthened by being used. From the energies of a muscle up to the highest faculty, intellectual or moral, repeated exercise of the function increases its intensity. Inseparable from the very idea of exercising the faculties, and of course from the practice of that exercise, is the requisition of exercising each faculty upon the objects which nature points out as related to it. Muscular strength is to be gained by familiarising the muscles with the resistance of external forces, and by the habit of conquering mechanical difficulties, varied to exercise all the muscles, which amount to several hundreds in the human frame. The senses are improved by long and particular training, applying each to its object;—sight, by habitual looking at distant or minute objects; hearing, by accurate practice in the perception of sounds;—taste, in the discriminating use of the palate. In the same manner, the observing faculties are rendered acute, and diversified by the constant practice of observation of details in existing objects, their qualities, and of passing events. The same law extends to the moral world. For the exercise of justice, the child must be made aware of his own and his neigh-

“bour’s rights, and be habituated practically to
“respect them in all contingencies. For the ex-
“ercise of benevolence, the habit of repressing the
“selfish feelings, and of actually doing good, kind,
“compassionate, and generous things, not by fits,
“but as a steady unvarying principle of action,
“will be found indispensable.

QUESTIONS, &c.

REV. DR. MAYO'S ADDRESS;

TO BE ANSWERED

BY TEACHERS.

1.

WHAT are the two main objects of religious teaching, and how are they to be accomplished ?

2.

In what respect are we imitating our blessed Lord in His teaching ?

3.

What appears the best plan with respect to the use of the Bible in Infant Schools ?

4.

What is the value of systematic instruction over desultory teaching ?

5.

What is the course of religious instruction recommended by Dr. Mayo ; what are the leading truths he would set forth, and what are the advantages of such a course ?

What other religious instruction may be given in addition to the principal course ?

7

What is the true province of poetry in Infant Schools, and why is the choice of the rhymes to be sung, important ?

8.

What are the best means to be used, to train children, to pray with their hearts and understandings ?

9.

Draw the portrait of a good Infant School Teacher ?

10.

To what dangers are Infant School Teachers much exposed ?

QUESTIONS, &c.

PRACTICAL REMARKS. .

CHAPTER I.

WHAT are the heads under which Education may be divided ?

2.

What are the truths to be brought first before children, and how should they be communicated ?

3.

What are the advantages to be derived from a course of Scripture biography ?

4.

What are the three points teachers should bear in mind, in their mode of giving their religious instruction ?

In what manner should teachers endeavour to enlighten the consciences, and awaken the religious feelings of their pupils ?

6.

Mention the five errors pointed out as common in the religious instruction given in Infant Schools, and shew upon what principles such teaching is wrong.

7.

In what way should the memory be cultivated ?

CHAPTER 11.

In what does moral education consist ?

9.

What is the effect of example upon children, and what more is requisite in forming the character ?

10.

What are the first impressions a teacher should endeavour to make upon his pupils ?

11.

What is likely to dispose them to submission and contentment ?

12.

Shew the importance of obedience, and in what manner habits of obedience should be formed.

13.

Shew in what the principle of honesty consists, and how children are to be trained to this virtue.

14.

What are the causes that often lead to habits of falsehood, and how should they be counteracted ?

15.

What are the vices to which the children of the poor are most exposed, and how can they best be strengthened against their influence ?

16.

Why is it important early to cultivate habits of industry, and how can this be done in Infant Schools ?

17.

What error in moral education is often observed in Infant Schools ?

18.

How should the moral discipline of the play-ground be carried on ?

CHAPTER III.

19.

Why should intellectual education commence with the cultivation of the senses, and how is it to be carried on ?

20.

How should lessons on objects be given ?

21.

How may children be instructed in colour ?

22.

How may children be profitably trained to the observation of form and size ?

23.

What errors should be avoided in giving lessons on form ?

24.

What plan is recommended in giving children their first ideas of number, how should it be followed up, and what errors avoided ?

25.

Draw out a plan for teaching geography to little children.

How should lessons on the human figure be carried on ?

27.

What is the advantage of commencing lessons on animals, with those that fall under daily observation ?

28.

Draw out a lesson on an animal ?

29.

In what way should the subject of plants be brought before children, and what should be the teacher's great object in all such instruction ?

30.

Draw out a lesson on some part of a plant, in which you lead the children to perceive the wisdom and goodness of the Creator.

31.

Why is it necessary to teach reading in Infant Schools ?

32.

What are the faults of the old system of teaching to read, and what are the advantages of the new plan ?

33.

What is the elliptical mode of teaching ; what are its advantages, and in what is it deficient ?

CHAPTER IV.

34.

Why should the physical state of the children be considered with reference to their education ?

What are the advantages of the various manual exercises introduced in Infant Schools ?

36.

How are they sometimes misused ?

37.

Show what use ought to be made of singing, and how it is misused ?

CHAPTER V.

In what spirit should teachers undertake their work, and how can they hope to carry it on successfully ?

39.

How should they prepare for their work ?

40.

In what way should they look at their failures ?

41.

What are the most important rules with respect to punishment ?

42.

What should be the rule with respect to presenting difficulties to the children to overcome ?

43.

What is the apparent good to be obtained by encouraging a spirit of emulation, and what real evils are found to follow ?

44.

Why is piety the most essential requisite in a teacher, and why is it not in itself a sufficient qualification ?

RULES

INFANT SCHOOL TEACHERS.

I. To follow a regular course on every subject which you teach in your school, whilst at the same time you avail yourself of any accidental circumstances which may excite an interest in the children.

II. Endeavour to prepare the children's minds to receive the particular instruction you are wishing to give, by finding something in their own experience in analogy with it, and thus proceed from something they know to something they do not know.

III. Let there be a marked seriousness and solemnity in your manner, when you commence your religious instruction; and in your Bible Lesson always endeavour to make one point prominent, and let your whole instruction bear upon it, like rays tending to a common centre.

IV. At the conclusion of each lesson gather up the crumbs ; that is, collect and arrange whatever has been brought forward, and let the children repeat, according to the elliptical plan of teaching, the substance of the lesson, in order that what they understand and have worked upon, may be fixed in their memories.

V. In your lessons on natural history do not seek to introduce the truth of revealed religion, or the events of Scripture history, but endeavour rather to show how the works of the Creator show forth his praise.

VI. Draw from the children, by proper questions, the fact, or precept, you may wish to bring out, and then imprint it on their memories by simultaneous repetition ; and as the work of an Infant Teacher is, not to communicate information, but to cultivate the powers which God has given to children, and to form habits, studiously avoid telling them any thing that you can in any way lead them to observe themselves.

VII. Before you give a lesson, endeavour to consider by what series of questions you can lead the children to the point on which you wish to engage their attention. It is very easy to tell a fact. Some teachers will simply narrate it ; others, by the elliptical plan, will suggest the ideas to the children, and allow them just to supply the word : others again make it obvious by suggestions and acting. Neither of these plans accomplish the point of cultivating habits of thought and observation. Consider always that you have given

a bad lesson if you have told the children much, and they have told you little. This will induce you continually to endeavour to draw into activity the children's powers of perception and reflection by questions which lead them to think, and you will by degrees acquire the power of doing so.

VIII. Avoid questions that can be answered by *Yes* and *No*, and do not suggest to the children the answer they ought to give ; as, for example, by stating two things, one of which is the answer to the question.

IX. Always be sure that your pupils are firm on one step, before you proceed to another, and let it not be your object to push them on, but to ground them well ; not to communicate knowledge, but to call out, and strengthen their faculties and form habits of attention.

X. Never present to children two difficulties at the same time ; if they have a physical or mechanical exercise, do not attempt to unite with it intellectual improvement.

XI. Keep them but a short time at any intellectual exercise, and as soon as it is over, relax their minds by some physical exertion or some recreation.

XII. Do not allow the children to be puzzled ; when you find a question above the grasp of their minds put it aside till the next day, or until some

future opportunity, when they may be better prepared for it.

XIII. Do not let the children speak in a tone, and prevent their speaking loud—it excites the mind and wears the body. Give whispering lessons, and lessons in a low tone occasionally, that they may feel their power to regulate their own voices.

XIV. When they get dull and inanimate, raise your voice, and repeat your words faster.

XV. Avail yourself of the effect of sympathy upon the children, and they may be governed almost entirely by it.

XVI. Take every opportunity of giving moral lessons, and encouraging moral habits on Scriptural principles, always remembering that the great object of Infant instruction is to form moral habits and to produce religious impressions.

XVII. Avoid threatenings, but having once declared your intention to punish the repetition of a fault, keep your word, or your authority is lost.

XVIII. Make it evident by the steady firmness of your mind, that you are to be obeyed; but do not speak angrily to a child. When you reprove shew the tenderness of a parent, and encourage this feeling in yourself by continually praying for the children;

strengthening your forbearance by remembering how often you offend your heavenly Father.

XIX. Arrange at night the plan for the next day's instruction; determine how each lesson shall be treated and what particular object you will aim at; seek for fresh information; you will thus come prepared for the questions and observations of the children; and be ready to present the different subjects in an interesting and improving manner; it is for want of this previous study and preparation that lessons are often given in a desultory manner, and that the instruction produces so little permanent effect.

HOME AND COLONIAL INFANT SCHOOL SOCIETY.

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This Society was instituted in 1836—its object is the improvement and extension of the Infant-School system, *on Christian principles*, at home and abroad; for this purpose large premises have been taken in Gray's-inn-road, near King's-cross, London; where married persons or single women of decided piety are received to board and lodge, whilst receiving instruction and attending the Model Schools, at a charge of 8s. a-week for fifteen weeks, and recommended to schools when qualified.

The Committee have just published a second edition of *Practical Remarks on Infant Education*, by the Rev. Dr. Mayo and Miss Mayo, price 2s. 6d., and are proceeding with a book of Hymns and other publications. They supply existing or new schools with qualified teachers, lessons, or any information they may desire. Teachers not fully acquainted with the Infant-school system are also admitted during the holidays or otherwise: at 12s. a-week. About 200 teachers have already obtained the benefits of this Institution.

N.B.—Nursery Governesses allowed to attend the Classes and Model School, at a charge of 1.. per month.

BRIEF HINTS

ON THE

FORMATION AND MANAGEMENT

OF INFANT SCHOOLS.

Building.—It is obvious that when the necessary funds can be obtained, a well-built, airy school-room, a good class-room, a residence for the teachers, and a spacious play-ground, are most desirable; but it is very important that in taking the requisite measures to procure them, the annual income which is essential to carry on the school properly be not sacrificed. Good teachers will do much for the improvement of an infant population with comparatively inferior buildings and a small play-ground; whilst the most commodious school-room and extensive play-ground will avail little, where the teachers are uninstructed or inefficient.

Two cottages standing together, the rooms on the ground floor thrown into one, a room upstairs appropriated for a class-room, and the remainder as a residence for the teacher, may often be obtained at a moderate rent—the gardens forming a play-ground; or a barn, with the walls white-washed, and the tiles pointed (not ceiled, as that often causes echo), and, when large enough, a portion divided off for a class-room, will frequently be found to answer the desired purpose; a residence for the teacher being procured very near—a point which should never be lost sight of. Of course it is unnecessary to mention the advantages of using Sunday-school rooms for Infant-schools during the week when they can be obtained. If money cannot be raised for erecting or renting a good school-room,

playground, &c., and also for paying really efficient teachers, the latter should have the decided preference. Under any circumstances a school-room should not be too large: 200 children are as many as a man and his wife can manage and instruct well, and 150 children are perhaps a better number. More than eighty or ninety should not be given to a female, though assisted, as she ought to be, by a stout girl from thirteen to sixteen years of age.* Two or three Infant-schools in a large parish will often be found convenient to the poor inhabitants, requiring them to bring their infants a shorter distance; and as premises of a moderate size can be frequently obtained at a lower rent, they may also be found less expensive than a large one.

In estimating the size of a school-room, one foot of wall may be allotted to each child:—for example, a room twenty feet by fifteen will be amply sufficient for seventy, and might accommodate eighty or ninety if the play ground be used with judgment, proper care be taken in the ventilation, a point which should engage the attention of all who erect or visit Infant-schools. An oblong form is by far the best, and the outside walls should not be less than ten feet high.

Fittings-up.—These may consist, where economy is desired, of a form, eight inches wide, fixed round the room, about four inches from the wall, and from eight to nine inches high; and a single board, about nine inches wide, nailed to the wall above it, at the height of six inches. Two or three loose forms of the same width, six or eight feet long; and a small table, for dining, about eighteen inches high. A gallery according to the number of children: for sixty, seven steps, eight feet wide, from eight to ten inches high, and eighteen inches in breadth, will be found sufficient. Galleries may be made exactly like common stairs, the dimensions of the steps only being different. When the space is small, or the room occasionally required for other purposes, they may be made to shut up at a very little additional expense. A country carpenter should

* Where economy is not so much an object, it is very desirable that the assistant should reside with the teacher; and it will often happen that he will make such progress as to become qualified, in the course

ing village, or in the same place, thus adding to the good done

not charge more than from 10*l.* to 15*l.* for the plain fittings-up of a school-room for seventy children, and from 15*l.* to 25*l.* for 150 or 200. The forms, &c., used in a Sunday-school may, by a little mechanical contrivance, easily be made available for infants, and in that case the expense would be considerably less. Swings, wooden bricks, and other articles for the play-ground may cost about 2*l.* or 3*l.* more; but these are not absolutely necessary, as children will soon find their own amusements.

Lessons, &c.—These are supplied, together with Rules for Infant schools, Prayers, and other requisites, by the “Home and Colonial Infant School Society,” properly mounted and fit for use. Care is taken not to send any thing superfluous. Sufficient to commence a school of seventy or eighty may be purchased for about 8*l.*; and for 200, for from 12*l.* to 15*l.*; or even less when great economy is indispensable.

Teachers.—The work of Infant tuition, properly conducted, is one of great bodily and mental labour: those engaged in it ought, in consequence, to live with comfort, be free from care, and have time to arrange and prepare their lessons, and to rest: it follows that all plans for making up a salary by evening tuition, Sunday-school teaching, or indeed any other employment, are very objectionable; and as the lives of many valuable teachers have already been sacrificed to this ill-judged economy, they should be decidedly opposed.

Holidays.—It is very desirable to make Saturday a whole holiday, that the voice of the teachers may be relieved from exertion for two consecutive days. A week or ten days' holiday should also be given about Christmas, and from a fortnight to three weeks at Midsummer or during harvest time. The little pupils will generally reap the benefit of this necessary recreation to the teachers, by the increased alacrity and energy with which the school will be conducted.

Income.—It is almost universally found, that the poorer classes prefer those schools where they pay for the instruction of their

children ; and it is also certain, that they are more willing to pay for young children, who require constant care, than for those advanced in years, and who are, as they express it, " out of harm's way," and even useful in the house. Two pence a week for one child, and one-half that sum for every other child of the same family, is, in general, very cheerfully acquiesced in. To provide for the cases of the very poor, annual subscribers of 10s. 6d. may be allowed to recommend one child, and of 1l. 1s. two children, *vice*—the committee being satisfied that they are *bonâ fide* cases of charity.

At this rate of payment, should the attendance be regular, a school of 180 children would give about 70l. a year ; which, with a comfortable residence and coals, is, under ordinary circumstances, a reasonable income for a man and his wife, who are really good teachers ; and ninety children, or 35l. a year, with a residence and coals, for a good female teacher.

It is very desirable that the teachers should receive the children's payments, as it gives them an interest in the prosperity of the school, as soon, therefore, as the usual average attendance is ascertained, this should be arranged—a temporary salary being fixed in the mean time for three or six months. In general, as the attendance of children is irregular, about 20l. a year for a man and his wife, and 10l. a year for a female teacher, in addition to the children's pence, together with a residence and coals, is found, when the population is tolerably numerous, to give very comfortable incomes. This plan, however, requires attention ; as in case the school should be thinned by an epidemic disease, or other unavoidable cause, the teachers should receive a donation, or have their income in some way made up to them. If teachers get into difficulties, or become depressed, the school always suffers.

In estimating the annual expense of an Infant-school, there must be added to these payments to the teachers, the annual rent of the premises, the cost of coals for the school and teachers, an allowance for cleaning the school-room when granted, and the ordinary repairs and incidental expenses. On the whole, it has been found that, with a wise economy and good teachers, about 70l. a year will be sufficient for a large school, and about one-half that sum for a smaller one : it has also been found that the amount of

one year's expenditure is more than sufficient for all the preliminary expenses.

Inspection.—Infant schools require less inspection by authority than any other schools—their success mainly depends on the teachers; and experience shews, that no exertion by other parties can supply their deficiencies. Teachers should be supplied from time to time with extracts from interesting books, anecdotes, and information of various kinds; but they should never be spoken to during school hours in the language of complaint or censure, or materially interfered with in their management of the children.

The frequent visits of persons who take an interest in the school, addressing some suitable questions to the children when in the gallery, and occasionally speaking a few words of approbation and encouragement to the teachers are of great benefit, and cannot be too strongly recommended. Authorized visitors, at stated times, however, will be found to give a coldness and dullness to the school, and interfere with that joyous and happy feeling which should prevail; often, also, they prevent the full development of the teacher's powers.

If infants at school are not happy, quick and intelligent, fond of their teachers, eager to come and sorry to go away; and if immediate order be not obtained in the school whenever required by the teachers, there must be some defect; the teachers should be sent for to the Committee or other authority, and told of it quietly but firmly: unless an alteration should be soon apparent, there is no effectual remedy but a *change*. The system of Infant instruction has already suffered much by continuing inefficient teachers; a mistaken kindness to them is of serious injury to the infant population; and great responsibility rests on those who, having the power of obtaining good teachers, do not exercise it.

INFORMATION DESIRABLE TO BE GIVEN BY
PERSONS APPLYING FOR MASTERS AND MIS-
TRESSES, OR MISTRESSES ONLY.

1. Dimensions of the school-room.
2. Usual or expected attendance.
3. What is the salary or emolument allowed.
4. Whether this depends in any way on the pence of the children.
5. Whether there is a house or rooms.
6. Whether furnished.
7. Whether living is expensive or rent high.
8. Whether expenses from London are allowed.
9. Whether an assistant is employed.
10. Whether the teacher is wanted immediately.
11. The cheapest and most desirable mode of conveyance.
12. Any other information that may be considered desirable.

QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES FOR ADMIS-
SION INTO THE INSTITUTION, AND THE BENE-
FITS OFFERED.

I. *Religious and Moral Principles.*—As the primary object of Infant schools is to cultivate religious principles and moral sentiments; to awaken the tender mind to a sense of its evil dispositions and habitual failings, before it is become callous by its daily intercourse with vice; and to lead it to that Saviour who so tenderly received such little ones and blessed them; to accustom them to trace the hand of their heavenly Father in his works of providence and grace; and to be impressed with the truth that his eye is ever upon them; since such is the *primary object*, an object which if unattempted, infant education is valueless, the Committee consider that in addition to an unimpeachable moral character, decided piety is indispensable.

II. Natural disposition and abilities.—There are certain qualifications of temper looked for in the teacher of infants. The power of sympathy is felt by all, but its effect upon young children is almost incalculable; on this account, in an animated lively manner, tempered by self-possession, and a cheerful good humour, combined with gentle firmness, are very important. To these should be added, that natural fondness for children which leads to a participation in all their little pleasures and pains, and bears patiently with their infirmities and ill-humours. It is also particularly necessary that Infant school teachers should possess an aptitude to teach, the ability of drawing out and directing the powers of children, a quickness of perception to see the effect of the instruction they are giving, and a readiness in availing themselves of accidental circumstances to awaken moral sentiment, or draw out some intellectual faculty.

Acquirements.—It would be desirable that a candidate should be able to read, to write a tolerable hand, to sing, should know the simple rules of arithmetic, be well acquainted with the Word of God, and possess some information in geography, and natural history.

The Committee, however, are aware that they must not expect to find all these qualifications combined in every candidate; but they think it desirable not to admit any one in whom there exists any decided impediment to their acquisition.

Benefits.—The advantages the Committee propose to offer are:—

I. Board and lodging at the low rate of 8s. a week for not less than 15 weeks.

II. The opportunity of attending any Lectures given in the Institution.

III. The daily instruction of a Superintendent both in the School and out of School hours.

IV. The instruction and advice of the Gentlemen and Ladies' Committee, and persons engaged by them; the opportunity of hearing them occasionally teach and explain the principles of Infant tuition, and the different plans adopted in Infant Schools.

V. Every facility for the improvement of the mind during the hours when not in attendance at schools or lectures, both in the use of the library of the Institution, and in conversing with the Superintendent and others connected with it. 9

Lastly. The recommendation of the Committee to Infant schools as applications are made to the Institution for teachers, and a constant desire on the part of the Committee, so long as they maintain a good religious and moral character, to recommend them to situations when out of employment.

CIRCULAR TO THE CLERGY.

REV. SIR,—During the short period which the HOME AND COLONIAL INFANT SCHOOL SOCIETY has been in existence, the Committee have had numerous applications for Teachers of the Established Church, with which they have been unable to comply. Of upwards of 300 applicants for instruction, 127 only have been members of the Establishment; which, although a greater proportion than of any other religious communion, is manifestly insufficient to meet the demand for Teachers, which has been made upon the Society by the Ministers and Friends of the Church.

In order to remedy this great practical inconvenience, and fully aware that the Church can furnish an adequate supply of suitable Teachers, the Committee are anxious, in order to cul^d them forth, to obtain the co-operation of the Clergy. For that purpose they have directed me to bring before you the fact,—which has not only come to their knowledge, but is also fully attested by the experience of other Institutions,—of the want of Teachers of the National Church; and, at the same time, to furnish you with the above Statement of the Qualifications which are considered necessary in a Candidate for admission into the Institution, and of the benefits offered to them.

The difficulty of obtaining Teachers of congenial sentiments has an obvious tendency to discourage the zeal of the Clergy in promoting Infant-schools, and, in some instances, to prevent their formation; the Committee therefore feel that in earnestly pressing this subject

upon your attention, they are discharging a duty to the Church, as well as endeavouring to promote the welfare of the rising generation; and they trust that if you should be acquainted with any individuals under your pastoral charge of decided piety, intelligence, good temper, and an aptitude to teach, and whose circumstances may render the occupation desirable, you will be induced, by the considerations above-stated, to recommend them to the Society.

Conscious that "The excellency of the power is of God and not of man," the Committee would respectfully intreat your prayers, that the Divine blessing may rest upon their labours; and that they may be honoured as the instruments of leading many infant children to Him, who has graciously encouraged all such efforts by the assurance—"It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish."

I have the honour to be, &c.

JOHN S. REYNOLDS, Hon. Sec.

Persons who are willing to favour this Institution by active kindness, are informed that subscriptions and donations are received by the bankers, Messrs. Williams, Deacon, and Co., or by any country banker, for remittance to them; by the Treasurer, John Bridges, Esq., 23, Red-Lion square; by any member of the Committee; or by Messrs. Nisbet and Co.; Messrs. Hatchard and Co.; Mr. Suter, 19, Cheapside; No. 20, Exeter Hall; and at the Record Office. Letters to be addressed to John S. Reynolds, Esq., Honorary Secretary, at the Institution Gray's inn-road, King's-cross.

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L^Y AND G. SEELEY, THAMES DITTON, SURREY.

